

The
Broken Wall

STORIES OF THE
MINGLING FOLK

By
EDWARD A.
STEINER





THE BROKEN WALL

BOOKS BY
EDWARD A. STEINER

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FROM "BETWEEN THE TRUSINA AND THE BRESINA"

The Broken Wall

STORIES OF THE
MINGLING FOLK

By

Edward A. Steiner

*Author of "On the Trail of the Immigrant,"
"Against the Current," etc.*

ILLUSTRATED



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To

MRS. ECKLEY B. COXE

*Those who could not express their gratitude
—of strange race and alien tongue,
“the maimed, the halt, the blind”;
the spirits of stricken toilers whose
widows and orphans you have
succoured and sustained—
these voice their thanks
through me in the
dedication of
this book*

INTRODUCTION

The Wall

THE great levelling forces of Democracy, recruited from many sources, have all halted before the racial wall.

However slight the ethnic barrier, even Christianity has struck its colours before it, and turned back in spite of an honest desire for universal conquest.

Nowhere is this defeat more apparent than in the United States, where a tint is equivalent to a taint, a crooked nose to a crooked character, and where a peculiar slant of the eyes is taken as unmistakable evidence that the race so marked cannot see straight.

Yet the wall has been broken here and there by the love of God, which asks nothing and gives everything; by that other love which is also of God, which asks everything, and gives everything; by the passion for fair play which is almost a national characteristic,

and by those vital, but uncatalogued forces which are called environment.

The sketches in this book are fragments of that broken wall, gathered in various places, and there were both joy and grief in finding them.

They are not shaped to fit any theory, or intended to teach a lesson, but it is the author's fervent wish that they may contribute to the enlargement of human sympathies and to the elimination of ethnic fears and prejudices.

E. A. S.

Grinnell, Iowa.

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I

The Lady of the Good Will Mines

“**I**F I were a poet!” A thousand times I have said this and, saying it, lost my chance to write plainly and honestly what I have seen and felt. So now I am going to write, although I am not a poet. I am going to write of a woman and a man. The two as far apart in wealth and culture as are the places in which they were born—thousands of leagues apart, and the great ocean between; so far apart that they could not speak each other’s language. She knew but two words of his, and he three of hers—and two of these he could not, or should not, have used in the presence of a woman.

The two words of his language which she knew were *boly*, which means “it hurts” or “does it hurt?” and *dobre*, which means “good” or “I will make it good.” The only English word that he could speak with

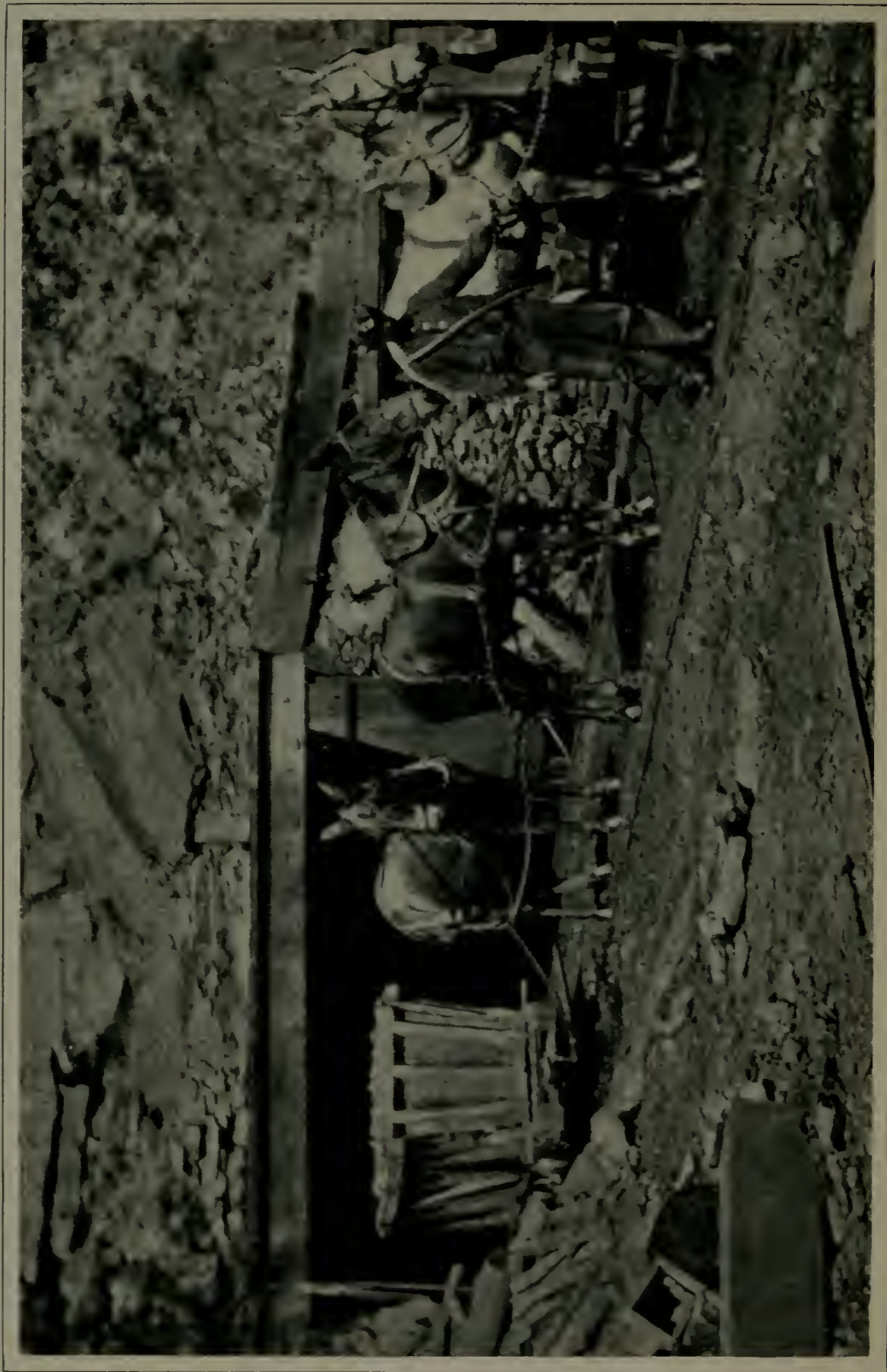
propriety was "Lady," and by that he meant this particular woman; for she was, in the true historic and linguistic sense, a lady. The other two words he had learned from the mine foreman, and that explains why they could not be spoken in her presence.

Who was this woman and who this man, so far apart and yet so near each other?

The "Lady" was the best product of a civilization which gave woman her fullest opportunity without spoiling her by ease and luxury. She was a Christian, and in her, religion had borne its full fruitage: gentleness of spirit, strength of character, and love for her fellow men.

Her home was built above the mines where black diamonds were dug by patient toilers, and she early realized that it was warmed and lighted and she and her children fed by the product of this bitter toil. She made the Good Will property a model mining town, which was no easy task; for miners are not model men, and the hazard of the work makes them reckless with money and morals.

She did all this before such a thing as the



"THE TASK OF MINING WAS HARD AND THE RISKS GREAT"

"social conscience" was discovered; even before the reward for such tasks came in having one's picture printed in the magazines.

In Good Will, and there alone, in all that bleak region, miners' huts were clean and sanitary; there were good schools and a hospital, and the ugly culm-piles were not permitted to crowd too closely upon human habitations. The task of mining was hard and the risks great, but there were a master and a mistress who were the miners' friends, and that made the work easier and the mines safer.

Then dawned upon the industrial world the age of consolidation, and the companies pressed closer and closer upon the Good Will property, which was not in the market. The master of the Good Will mines would not sell. The miners were his friends, and he knew the spirit of the great companies, which cared for dividends and dividends alone. But his coal was left standing on the tracks while other coal travelled to the markets; mountains of uncartered coal choked the mouth

of the pit; and then he sold because he had to.

It was not a niggardly company this; it paid all that the property was worth—millions and millions of dollars. The exact figures would make one dizzy to contemplate, although we are becoming calloused to the shock which comes from the misfortunes of great fortunes. When the master of Good Will died, he left all this wealth to the “Lady.”

Did she move to New York and build herself a mansion on Fifth Avenue big enough to lose her soul in? Did she take her daughters and hawk them on the matrimonial markets of Europe, selling them to the highest titled bidder? No. She stayed in Good Will. The mines were sold, it is true; but the miners were still there. Those who helped to make the wealth were gone—the Welsh and English miners of twenty years ago, and their places were taken by crude, unlettered, half-heathen peasants, who could not speak her language or understand her motives. She stayed in Good Will with the

miners, standing between them and the rapacious company—their advocate and friend, their “lady bountiful.”

If I were a poet, I should not write about the town Good Will, and I fear if I were a millionaire I would not live there.

Years ago those mountains were beautiful—the trees green and golden in the spring and autumn; but now the hills are disembowelled and refuse lies about in cold, dreary heaps, with here and there evidences that the Creator artist is trying to bring back the beauty of which men have robbed Him.

A vine has caught in a scanty bit of soil, and He is draping it about the culm-heaps; a tree is ineffectively struggling to spread its branches, its leaves parched from breathing the sulphur-laden air. The creeks which ran merrily to the river are now choked by rotten tree stumps, around which empty tin cans, beer barrels, and broken whiskey flasks cling, holding back the thick filth in which no fish can live and no child can play and dream of golden days.

The model village has almost fallen to de-

cay and the houses are feeders for dividends ; the paint is eaten off, the fences are broken down, the shingles are in shreds and do not keep out the torrential rains. In vain the "Lady" protests ; the more she protests, the more unbearable life becomes in Good Will, and yet the "Lady" stays, because the miners are still there.

The man was born in the Carpathians, in a picturesque village by a pure stream. He was baptized into the Greek Catholic Church, and they named him after the patron saint of the place—Joseph. Only the fit survive infancy in that village, for the climate is rigorous, life is Spartan, the food coarse and not always plentiful. Toil begins early and is unremitting.

Joseph grew to be a strong lad, was confirmed, found his pleasures in drinking and dancing, courted in his rough way, married and begot children. The world was small ; it began where the geese grazed, at the edge of the village pasture, and ended with the last acre on the Baron's estate. Wealth, Joseph never hoped to possess, for that was in the

possession of a few and remained there. Of honours and station in life he never dreamed. He was a poor peasant's son ; his father left him a cabin and three acres of land, and he would think himself fortunate to die with these things still in his possession ; for the love of strong drink was growing among the peasants and the mortgaging of property to the Jews was becoming a common thing.

Into Joseph's discouragement one day there shone a ray of light. Creeping slowly through the valleys, leaping over the mountains, came a new hope. Tidings from America told of wealth, of mountains of gold, awaiting those who dared. That wealth belonged to a few, to those born to it and those who were shrewd enough to bargain for it, was nothing but a cheap myth. In America, any man who dared, got it by using a shovel and a pickax. Even the toilers might reach a high station in life in this New World—this wonderful America.

One and another went from that village in the Carpathians and returned with money. What mattered it if they came back smelling

of carbolic acid, with sallow skins, limping limbs, and lungs which laboured like the blacksmith's wheezy bellows? They came back with money and bought land—ten, twenty, even fifty acres—and the Baron's estates, for ages in the possession of one family, began to dwindle, while the peasants built themselves brick houses, put in iron stoves, and had a pig-killing regularly twice a year. Joseph could not resist the sweeping current which carried the young manhood away across the sea. Many from his village had gone to Good Will and wrote back about the wages, the meat every day, the beautiful cottages, and the "Lady"; so he went.

Thirty-two years of age he was, his passport said, five feet six inches high, of dark complexion, gray eyes, and no bodily blemish. He had to leave his cabin, his wife, and two children; but in two, at the most three, years he would be back, and then the good times would be theirs. In the meanwhile "*Z boghem*" (with God). The wife cried and the children cried; he did not cry until they were out of sight. Then came the excitement

of a first far journey, the pain died in his heart and the fierce passion for saving money killed the homesickness.

When he reached America, he bought a railway ticket to Good Will. Once there, he found a boarding-place with twenty others in the house of a widowed country woman : he bought a cap and a lamp, a pickax and a shovel, and went to work, helping a miner. He lived almost like an animal, thinking of neither body nor soul ; only of wife and children and saving enough money to send home to buy land.

For a year he helped another miner ; then came the chance to do that perilous but remunerative thing of blasting coal by himself.

From the company's store he bought powder and fuse, and went to work in his chamber. One year, two years more, and then house, wife, children, and land.

Fiercely he dug into the unresponsive rock and lighted the fuse, which was defective, and damp from the sweat of his body. He went back behind the sheltering rock and waited ; but the fire did not leap, the shower of coal

did not fall. Cautiously he crept near, broke off the seared end of the fuse, lighted it again, and leaped back to his shelter. Again no blast, and he waited five, ten long minutes. The foreman passed by and said the two words of English with which Joseph had grown familiar, and others that he but vaguely guessed at. The foreman was warning him not to return to that chamber, but Joseph did not understand. He was seeing the land, the coveted land ; so he crept back, bent over the reluctant fuse, and the charge struck him straight in the eyes.

When he was brought to the top of the mine with burned face and singed hair, the "Lady" was there to receive him ; for that was just why she had stayed in Good Will. She was there with her doctor and her nurses. She asked, "Will he live?" The doctor replied : "I am afraid he *will*—he is not hurt badly, but his eyes are gone."

Joseph lay in the hospital in a soft bed. There were bandages over his eyes and it was dark all around him. With skillful fingers gentle nurses cared for him and

fed him dainties between his burned lips. He was hurt, he knew ; but as he felt his swelling muscle and supple limbs he thought there was nothing serious the matter, and that in a week or a month he would be at work again, getting money for the land.

One morning a man came to him, called him Joe, and told him that he had brought him money, two hundred dollars—all his if he would sign a paper promising not to go to court and ask for more.

Why should he not sign a paper? Why should he ask for more money? What a benevolent gentleman ! So Joseph made his mark, for he could not write. There were two witnesses, and they signed their names.

A week passed, and another and still another before they removed the bandage from his eyes. He felt relieved with the pressure gone, but something seemed still left lying there—it shut the daylight out. Why not remove it all? The pain was gone. He felt with his hard fingers. The bandage *was* all

gone ; yet he could not see. A great cry like that of a wounded beast rose from his breast. Blind ! Blind ! Blind ! A beggar ! No land, no home—all gone ! But he had two hundred dollars which the benevolent gentleman had given him. He could pay his passage home and have one hundred and seventy dollars left.

For one hundred and seventy dollars he had sold his eyes !

The “ Lady ” was there. That was why she had stayed in Good Will. She touched his sightless eyes and said : “ *Boly ?* ” (Does it hurt ?)

And he cried like a child : “ *Boly ! Boly ! Boly !* ”

Then she said, “ *Dobre ! Dobre ! Dobre !* ” (It will be good ! It will be good !)

She meant to fight his case for him. The fuse the company had sold him was defective ; he was not sufficiently instructed in the use of powder ; the foreman’s warning was ineffective, for he did not understand it.

The “ Lady ” consulted her lawyer, she appealed to the courts, she fought the company.

That was her business ; that was why she stayed in Good Will.

But the company had the paper, Joseph had signed it in the presence of witnesses ; he had accepted two hundred dollars. There it was in black and white : he had assumed the risk, he had been properly warned ; and in consideration of the payment of two hundred dollars had signed away the right to go to the courts.

Winter had come upon Good Will, and with it bitter, biting cold. The "Lady" with the millions had gone neither to Florida nor Lakewood nor California. She stayed in Good Will just *because* bitter winter had come and the miners were there, and Christmas was near—the season of peace and goodwill.

Every one was talking about the "Lady's" Christmas. As far as one could see from the hilltop where her house stood, over many a mile of wrecked landscape, past huge breakers and mountains of culm which marked the location of the "patches," they talked of the "Lady's" Christmas. For two weeks she had

been in the city buying, buying, buying, for the miners' children. Toys and candies, stockings, caps, and mittens, and all the things that delight the little ones. Four thousand children were on her list and on her heart, and all of these were waiting for the "Lady's" Christmas.

At last it came with the jingle of bells and the lighted Christmas trees. Every school-house and every church in every "patch" for miles around Good Will had a Christmas tree laden by the "Lady's" Christmas gifts. The children came, and when they went back to the little huts they were gladder than they had been all the year. The biggest tree was in the "Lady's" house, and thither the children of Good Will came, while their mothers and fathers looked in at the windows ; for the room was not large enough for all.

Through the drifting snow they led Joseph, the blind miner, to see the Christmas tree. A blind man to see the Christmas tree ! As he came in, the children made room for him, and he was led nearer and nearer to the tree under the radiance of the light which he

could not see. Then he felt the hand of the "Lady" over his eyes.

"*Boly?*" (Does it hurt?) she asked; Joseph broke into bitter lamentations.

"*Boly! Boly! Boly!*"

And she said in that quiet and solemn voice of hers which sounded like hushed organ tones, "*Dobre! Dobre! Dobre!*" and put a paper into his hand. The Greek Catholic priest who stood by took the paper and read it—translating it for Joseph.

"I wish I could give you your sight for a Christmas gift, but I cannot perform miracles; so I give you one thousand dollars ——" Then Joseph cried, hysterically: "*Dobre! Dobre!*" But the priest stopped him.

"A ticket to your home in Hungary ——"

"*Dobre! Dobre!*" Joseph cried, and again the priest checked him.

"And ten dollars a month until the thousand dollars begin to bear sufficient interest."

Then Joseph fell on his face and stretched his hands out towards the warmth where he knew the tree was and where the "Lady"

must be, and, pressing his hands to his heart, cried :

“ *Lady ! Boly ! Boly !* ” (meaning that his heart hurt from joy). And the “ Lady,” taking his rough hands in hers, said : “ *Dobre ! Dobre ! Dobre !* ”

* * * * *

Again I am wishing for the poet's pen to tell what I have seen and felt, and again I write extraordinary facts in an ordinary way. This time I write of defeated soldiers returning home after the battle. As they go to their ship in the gray morning, the city through which they pass is as unconscious of their going as it was of their coming.

Thousands of leagues away are the soldiers' mothers who bore them in pain, nourished them with the fruit of hard toil, and clothed them in the woof of their own unremitting industry. Mothers, wives, and children parted from them in tears wiped from their weather-beaten cheeks by the gentle touch of hope.

These soldiers came to our shores determined to fight and win. They did not ask :

“Is the day long or short?” They did not fear the dark and damp of the mine or the scorching fires of belching furnaces. They obeyed the harsh command of their captains, stolidly facing danger and death.

The battle of the year is over—30,000 and more were slain; while over ten times that number were wounded and disabled.

The vast majority of those who gave life and health for a pittance of wage are these returning wanderers who were born, bred, and nourished under alien skies, and whose names cannot be pronounced by our unskilled tongues.

It is of these survivors who are going home that I wish to write. In broken ranks and small companies they march, led by a man whose interest in them is measured by the number of dollars in their pockets. A pitiable sight are the vanquished ones; hobbling on wooden legs, swinging loose coat sleeves, breathing the damp air with a wheeze which speaks all too plainly of lungs impaired. And, most pathetic of all, carefully feeling their way through the never-changing dark-

ness, are those whose eyes were given in the battle—that we might see the more.

Among all these fifteen hundred who have given strength, health, limbs, and eyes to society, only one leaves this country with a reward, and a friend whose solicitude reaches to the ship and across the ocean to the very village from which he came.

No, the “Lady” cannot give him back his eyes, and what a pity that she cannot! A great, strong fellow he is, this Joseph Polyak. His face almost handsome, now that the veil of blindness hangs over it. His muscular body is clothed from head to foot in the best new garments, all a gift from the “Lady”—besides the money and the pension.

To my inquiry as to his well-being he answered with a pathetic shrug of his shoulders: “*Dobre, Dobre!*” Then he told me again and again what the “Lady” had done for him. Reverently he raised his hand towards Heaven, as if to invoke the Deity.

“If I were the Pope,” he said, “I would

make her a saint." To his sightless eyes I am sure she wears a halo—and that is enough.

The steamship company treats the returning immigrants with the same scant courtesy with which it treated them when they came. In a long, damp shed fifteen hundred of them waited, with no place to warm themselves or rest their weary feet. They were driven rudely and harshly up the gangplank and their tickets torn from their hands. There was no one to relieve them of their bags and bundles, although above them the cabin passengers, who are not so profitable to the company, walked on soft rugs and breathed perfume laden air. Courteous officers watched over them and directed them in civil phrases, while below, fifteen hundred men who had toiled and suffered to make the holiday in the cabin possible, were being crowded like cattle into the steerage. Will the cabin realize this as it looks down upon those crowds—as it sees the pale faces, flapping sleeves, and empty eye sockets? Or will it look with suspicion

upon them and call them a menace and a problem ?

A steward had to be bribed to be civil to this blind man, for the steamship company does not encourage civilities to its best paying human freight. Joseph Polyak did not complain ; all he wanted beside what he already had was a little English book, so that he could "teach his children the language of the 'Lady.'"

And now he is ready for the long voyage with the little book clasped to his breast. He will sail along rugged coasts, through stormy and peaceful seas, by glorious islands to strange harbours ; but he will see nothing of the beauty of earth or sea. When he lands, he will be guided by trusted hands to the very village from which he came, and there his wife and children will be waiting for him ; but he will not see them. His rough, toil-worn fingers will move over their faces, and by touch alone will he know how the little ones have grown. The wife will weep as she looks into his sightless face and she will cry "Boly ! Boly !" as if her heart would break.

But he will say, with a smile almost seraphic,
“ Dobre ! Dobre ! ” and that night, when upon
their knees they ask the intercession of their
saints, I am quite sure they will pray for the
“ Lady ” of the Good Will Mines.

II

Committing a Matrimony

LOWER TOWN, where I lived for some years as a pastor, was infested by ragmen. Hardly had one of them called out his doleful and somewhat inquiring "Rags? Rags?" till another made his appearance and more confidently called out: "Rags, Rags!"

"Where the carcass is there the eagles are gathered together."

Where there are rags there are ragmen. They throve in Lower Town, and never inquired of The Hill for "rags—rags."

One of them grew to be quite a familiar figure at the parsonage, because the minister's extravagant wife, instead of taking the few pennies for her rags, gave them to Jakey, the black-eyed son of the Jewish ragman. Nearly every day he would stop his raggy horse in front of the parsonage, and smiling through his small gray eyes at the study

window, would call out, "Haf you got's any rags for sell?"

I would often chat with him about the Old Country, about the rag business, and sometimes we would even venture upon the delicate subject of Theology. One morning, hearing a furious ring at the door, I hastened to open it and was confronted by Isaac Abramowitz, the ragman, dressed in his best. Without wasting time in the usual formalities, Isaac stated his errand:

"Mr. Breacher, I vant you to gome to mine house und gommit a matrimony."

"Do what?" I asked.

"Gommit a matrimony, make a marriage," was the reply.

"But, Mr. Abramowitz, why do you ask me to marry any one at your house?"

"Vell, Mr. Breacher, I dells you how it iss. You see my niece vot lifs ofer me, she valls in lof mit Mike Flannagan, vot lifs under me, und her parents vot iss fery shtrict Jews, dey don't vant it; put dey bote zay dey must marry, und so dey gets married at my house. She don't vant no briest, und he don't vant

no rabbi to gommit de vedding, und dey asks you to gome for a gombromise. Vill you? Mike vill bay you vell, und you must gome right away, because dey is vaiting."

I hastily donned my "wedding garments," and together we wended our way towards one of the many tenement houses of Lower Town. The halls and stairway were dirty, but upon reaching the third floor signs of hard scrubbing were visible. The very air felt clean, although it was permeated by kitchen odours.

The door was opened by Mrs. Abramowitz, a matronly looking woman in black satin, with numerous gold ornaments, and showing no signs of the rag business, I thought. The room was filled to overflowing by men, women and children. "Shades of Abraham and St. Patrick!" I muttered as my eyes fell on the motley crowd of all tribes and tongues, among which, however, Irish and Hebrew predominated.

The bride-to-be, dark-haired and dark-eyed, a typical daughter of Israel, stood in the centre of the room, and clinging to her was

Mike Flannagan, a red-haired, snub-nosed, freckled Irishman. A stranger pair had certainly never approached Hymen's altar.

"Here is de breacher, Rebekah," called out Mr. Abramowitz, addressing the bride-elect.

She came forward, saying, "I am glad you came. I was afraid you wouldn't want to marry us."

"Why not?" I asked.

"Well, because we are not of your faith."

"That makes no difference to me," I said, "but I hope that you will not regret marrying Mike. You are so unlike in faith and in blood, you were brought up so differently, and I fear ——"

"But I love him, Mr. Pastor, and I will risk everything. The only thing that worries me is that father and mother will not give their consent. Would you mind going up to see them before you marry us?"

I gladly consented and, followed by the gaping crowd, I climbed another flight of stairs to a room from which came mournful cries and groans, as of some one weeping over the dead.

Opening the door, a strange contrast to the festive wedding guests presented itself. Sitting upon the floor in torn garments were the two old people. He, gray-bearded and parchment-skinned, the furrows of sorrow plowed deeply upon forehead and cheeks. His eyes were glowing. The fire in them was like the gleam of steel, trying to hold back the tears. There were ashes upon his head, and the spirit of Jeremiah seemed to have taken flesh again, to weep out his lamentations. His wife seemed older than he. Her hair was unkempt, her dress in tatters, and she bowed to the ground, weeping and wailing sore.

"They are sitting *Schivuh*," whispered Rebekah to me.

When a Jew dies, his family spends the first seven days mourning, sitting upon the floor in sackcloth and ashes. When Rebekah married Mike she would be dead to her parents, so they had already begun the days of mourning.

I approached the old couple, but they took no notice of my greeting until Isaac Abramowitz said :

"That is de breacher."

They looked up and eyeing me critically said as if relieved, "He looks not like a *Galloch*" (priest).

"I am not a priest; I am a minister, and I came to ask you to give your consent and blessing to your daughter's marriage."

"Ve gots no daughter," they replied in broken English.

"She is die to uns, a *Goy* (Christian) she vill marry, bork she vill eat, und haf a gross on de vall."

I clasped the old man's withered hand as I asked, "Is Rebekah your only child?"

"Yes," he said, "four ve had, und tree in Russia ve buried."

"And do you wish to bury this one too?" I asked.

"Gott knows ve don't, Mr. Minisder. Ve lof her, our all she is und she is a good daughter to uns, aber it iss against our religion for her a *Goy* to marry, und she must pe die to uns. De Goys hates und gills de Jews."

At this Isaac Abramowitz stepped forward and said :

"Now I knows dat issn't zo. Gristians don't hates und gills de Jews in dis gountry. Dis minister, he dalks to me every day ven I bass his house, und my Jakey, yes, my Jakey, he goes to his Zunday-zgool. Here, Jakey, gome here. I vill show you vat dey learn dis kid in Gristian Zunday-zgool."

In response to this invitation, Jakey wrapped himself into his mother's skirts like fruit into an omelet, and had to be coaxed out by a penny.

"Now, Jakey, I wants you to dell dese beeples vat you learned in Zunday-zgool. Who lofs you, Jakey? Now, Jakey, dell de beeples who lofs you?"

Jakey, sucking his dirty finger, was poked in the ribs, as once more his father asked, "Jakey, who lofs you?"

"Jesus lofs me," he piped up, as a beaming smile spread over the face of his father.

"You see? he says Jesus lofs him, a boor Jewish poy, vat gets half gilled in de old goundry py Gristians. Dey learns him here

dat Jesus lofs him, und his deacher gives him a pook vot vas vorth wholesale dwendy-dree zends, vor a brize vor learning de Multitudes. Now, Mr. Breacher, you asks him zomedings."

Out of deference to their Jewish feelings I asked, "Who was the first man, Jakey?"

"Now, Jakey," said his father. "Jakey, buts dat finger out of your mouds, und dells de breacher who vas de virst man."

"Now, Jakey," I asked again, "who was the first man?" and Jakey, rising to the occasion, shouted :

"De first man vas George Vashington!"

The sentiment of the audience was divided as to the correctness of this answer, but the old man turned to me and said :

"Do you deach in your church dat Jesus lofs de Jews?"

"Yes indeed. Jesus Himself was a Jew, and He loved them and taught us to love them."

"Gots all de Gristians de same Jesus?" again queried the old man.

"Yes indeed, they have."

"Dose in Russia too?"

"Y-es," I replied hesitatingly.

"Vell, vy do de Gristians de Jews vrom dere Vaterland drive out? Vy gills dey dem?"

"I don't know," I said. "But tell me, has any Christian here in this country ever robbed you? Has any one tried to drive you out? Tell me."

"Ach yes! De kinder throw stones on me und calls me Sheeney."

I was unable to reply, for it was only too true. Here, also, the persecution had begun although it was yet in its infancy.

Rebekah, coming forward at this point, relieved my confusion as she cried:

"Father leben, dear father, bless me, bless me! I will always be your daughter, and always be true to our faith even though I marry a Christian."

The mother, whose heart had softened while she listened, now threw herself at her husband's feet and also implored him to bless their child. The struggle was great. Hesitating, he said:

"Mr. Bastor, vill you so much off our religion gif into de vedding den you can? You know it iss py uns de barents go around de *challa* (bride) dree dimes vile de rabbi reading iss, und de *chosen* (groom) must a glass break under his veet pefore de zeri-monials ofer iss."

I gladly consented to this novel innovation; Irish neighbours and Jewish friends poured in from the hall where they had been anxiously awaiting developments, and formed a curious circle around the bridal party. I called Mike aside, and said to him:

"Mike, these people are going to give you their blessing; aren't you glad of it?"

Mike shrugged his shoulders as if it meant little or nothing to him. So I called to his mind the fact that he was to marry into a fine family.

"Your rivirence," was his reply, "Oi thought they was ragpickers."

"Yes, but they are also the relatives of the saints and apostles whom you revere."

Mike's astonishment was great. "Why Oi thought they was Sheeneys!"

"Nevertheless," I said, "they are of the blood of the apostles and saints."

What seemed to restore to Mike's saints the lustre of their tarnished halos was the fact that the relationship existed so long ago.

"Mike," I said again, looking him straight in the eye, "you drink."

"Yis, your rivirence, occasionally a dhrap, but it's a moighty big one."

"Mike," I resumed, "I want you to look at these old people whose daughter you are taking from them, almost breaking their hearts. If you should ill-treat her, it would kill them. Your enemy, Mike, is drink, and I want you to pledge to-day, before God, that you will not touch another drop of liquor as long as you live, God helping you."

"Oi promise," said Mike with earnest emphasis.

"I will tell you," I went on, "how I want you to take your pledge. These people have a custom that the groom must break a glass under his feet before the wedding ceremony is over. Whatever it means to them, it will mean to you, and to your bride, and

to God that you will never drink another drop."

"Oi'll do it!" replied Mike, pulling a pint bottle of whiskey from his hip pocket, "and this be the bottle Oi'll break, and niver anither shall Oi take to me lips, so help me God and the Howly Vargin!"

The bride and groom now took their places, while the old couple walked around them three times, he reverently repeating some prayers. Then the young people with clasped hands plighted one another their troth, "for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer."

Before offering a prayer, I took Mike's bottle and placing it under his foot, said:

"Friends and neighbours, it is a custom among the Jews for the groom to break a glass under his feet before he is declared a husband. It is a custom which we, in Lower Town, might well borrow. I have married some of you who are here. I have gone into and out of nearly every house in Lower Town, and there is hardly one where drink has not brought poverty or death. Mike Flannagan, you promise here, before God

and these witnesses, that as long as you live you will not taste strong drink ? ”

And Mike Flannagan, with the mighty power of his heavy foot, came down upon his whiskey bottle so that the windows rattled and a vase tumbled from a shelf as he answered in stentorian tones :

“ Oi’ll niver taste the bastely stuff, so help me God and the Howly Vargin.”

A strong odour of whiskey permeated the room, and doubtless many a man quoted to himself, “ For what purpose is this waste ? ”

But the minister, clasping the hands of Mike and Rebekah, most solemnly pronounced them husband and wife, “ In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.”

* * * * *

Spring came reluctantly and without rapture to Lower Town. It lingered on The Hill, warmed its sloping lawns, wakened the crocuses and welcomed the robins. Then grudgingly it crept down to where only dandelions waited to be resurrected, where the leaf-buds on scraggy trees were

thick from railroad soot, and where clanging noises of banging cars and grinding wheels frightened the robins away, leaving the sparrows in undisturbed possession of the field.

Though spring itself came so slowly, and many a time seemed not to come until grown to summer, we knew when Easter came, for people carried flowers to the cemetery of the great city which was near us and there were always babies to baptize on that day. Looking from my window on Easter morning, I saw the red head of Mike Flannagan, grown more familiar since his wedding ; for Rebekah came to church occasionally on Sunday evening, and Mike came with her.

That Easter morning, his cheery face had an unusual smile upon it ; the sort of smile which vibrates between laughter and tears and may become either at any time. There were many steps to the parsonage door, and he leaped them as if they were the roofs of the fast moving freight cars to which he was accustomed. Then came a nervous pull at the bell and before I reached the door, another

peal ; although I am sure he heard my hastening footsteps. "Your rivirence !" he cried breathlessly.

"What's the matter, Mike?" half guessing what his errand was.

"We've got a piece of freight at our house, your rivirence, came on the 6 : 40 Merchant's Dispatch. It's a by, your rivirence, and from the way he's yelling, Oi'll not need the call-by to git me out av me bed, whin there's a train to be pulled out. Foinest looking chap you iver seen ; looks something loike me."

I shook his rough hand, which gripped mine like a vise as I congratulated him. "Well, your rivirence, you've helped in the damage and you've mixed us up till Oi don't know whether Oi'm a Sheeney—Oi mean a Jew"—he corrected himself—"or a real, live Oirishman, who was baptized into the Howly Catholic Church in the county of Tipperary, Oireland.

"Rebekah, she feels mixed up, too—and the baby ! the saints have mercy on it ! it's mixed up worse yit. You've just got to

straighten us all out and Oi guess you'd better begin at the baby and baptize him *your way*. Do you think it would hold, up there, if something should happen to the little chap? "

Giving him all the assurance I could, I promised to come that afternoon at three o'clock to baptize the baby.

Rebekah and Mike lived on Mt. Airy Street, a sandy slope, from the top of which one could look down upon a fast growing Ghetto on one side and an overgrown Irish settlement on the other. A small house of three rooms was the birthplace of this new resident of Lower Town; it was a mixed home in many respects. The parlour floor was covered by a rather gaudy ingrain carpet. There were a marble-topped table, with a red vase full of paper flowers, crayon portraits of Rebekah's parents, a huge Irish harp, the framework of a floral piece once given to Mike by the "Hibernian Lodge," and an enlarged picture of himself in the uniform of the same fraternity.

Jewish and Irish relatives had come to the

baptism, and surrounded the cradle where the baby itself lay, a mixed bundle of most peculiar possibilities.

Its eyes were large and dark and showed the peculiar Semitic lustre; its nose was scarcely visible and promised to be Irish; its fluffy hair—well, Mike said it would be blond and I did not think it wise to voice my convictions.

While I was looking at the baby and praising its varied charms, my coat was vigorously pulled. I turned and was confronted by one of Rebekah's relatives. He had the reputation of a man versed in the law and officiated as a rabbi on the great holy days, when religion came to busy Israel with a rush, and extra help had to be employed.

"Mr. Breacher," he began, "dis baby is a Jew, und you can't un-Jew him."

"How is that?" I asked.

"Vell, you see, a baby, according to our law, comes down from de modder, und he is a Jew if de modder is a Jew, even if de fodder is a *Goy*—I mean a Gristian"—he corrected himself.

"But," I said, "his parents have asked me to baptize him and of course you can't prevent my doing it."

"I don't want to make no fuss; your little vater won't do much damage—but he has to get a Jewish name—und according to our custom, we give the child the name of his nearest relative who was dead."

"His grandfather, may he rest in peace, was named Moses, and you must name the baby Moses."

Moses Flannagan! When the Irish heard that proposal, they laughed as only the Irish know how to laugh.

"His name must be Patrick!—The kid's Irish! Patrick Flannagan!" they shouted with one accord. The Jews cried "Moses!" and the Irish cried "Patrick!" As they grew more and more excited I felt myself in the centre of a veritable cyclone. Puzzled, I held the baptismal bowl, when suddenly an inspiration came to me, as if straight from Heaven.

"Friends and neighbours," I said, "this baby is the child of two races and of two faiths. We must not begin to quarrel over

its name. May I ask the privilege of naming it?" For answer, the Jews again cried for Moses and the Irish for Patrick, while the baby howled lustily. Then Mike, taking it in his arms, stepped before me.

"Have it your way, your rivirence," he said. Rebekah, from her couch, nodded approval, and the ceremony began.

I pledged them both to bring up their child in the fear of God and according to His law. As my hand touched the baby's forehead, the Irish called out one more defiant "Patrick!" and the Jews hurled back a hostile "Moses!" while I, taking a syllable of each name, baptized the baby—Pat-mos.

The ceremony thus safe over, they passed refreshments; candy, crackers and wine. The Jews partook freely of the sweets, refusing the wine. Then there were toasts to the parents and to the baby, after which the preacher was asked to say a word, and this is what he said:

"My dear friends,—Years and years ago, an old Jew whose name was John stood upon an island named Patmos. That is the name we have given to Mike's and Rebekah's

baby. This Jew was a Christian, and he was a Christian, not because he was born into the church, but because he followed the man Jesus of Nazareth, who also was a Jew.

“You Irish and we Americans, too, believe that all the saints and apostles were Catholics or Presbyterians or Methodists, with the exception of Judas; of course you all know that Judas was a Jew. Let me remind you that so were all the apostles.

“This John was very old and lived long after his Master had gone to Heaven, and on this island of Patmos he had a vision. He wrote down what he heard and saw, and sent it to the churches in which Jews and Gentiles lived together and learned to love one another. This is what he wrote :

“‘I, John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle which is called Patmos, for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.’

“You Irish now have a relative who is part Jew and part Gentile, but long ago, a Jew

wrote to you as a brother and companion and you have forgotten that.

“You Jews—a Jew, a man of your own flesh and blood, stood on the island which was called Patmos, and declared himself a brother to the whole human race, regardless of its origin. You also have forgotten that from your race sprang the great Brother of humanity. Remember that now you have a relative according to the flesh, half Gentile—half Jew.

“I hope and pray that this little, mixed baby will help us to remember what we all have forgotten, what neither the church nor the synagogue has helped us to practice; that we all have one Father, one spiritual Lord, and one destiny.”

As I stepped out upon the sandy hilltop, called Mt. Airy, the chimes of the cathedral were ringing the Angelus and from the steeple of my church the bells were calling to the Christian Endeavour meeting.

The rough, north wind had changed, and the long deferred spring came, blown gently from the south. Like the warm, soft touch

of a lover's hand, I felt it upon my cheeks, and as the Jews returned to the Ghetto and the Irish went scattering in the other direction, I asked Him who directed the south wind and sent it to Jew and Gentile alike—"Oh, Lord, how long!"

I heard nothing in reply except the words of the beloved apostle, "I, John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and *patience* of Jesus Christ."

III

“Hisn, Mine and Ourn”

WHEN a company begins to operate a large steel plant or coal mines it usually begins to operate its hospital also ; for accidents and disease are grim by-products of the business.

As a rule, the hospital is well within the stockade and is more carefully guarded than the processes of the chemical laboratory. No one but the superintending physician knows its secrets and usually he is a taciturn, close-mouthed man ; for one of the prime requisites of his position is, to keep his mouth shut, whether he keeps his eyes open or not.

A cup of coffee, a big cigar and jovial companions loosened the tongue of one of them one evening, and when he had finished his story every cigar was out and a heavy silence had settled over us. As he apologized for spoiling our good time he said :

"It isn't all so dark ; there are funny spots in our experience. Just light a fresh cigar and I'll tell you the last one I had. I hope it will take the curse off the other."

The cigars were passed, the men sought the proper level for their feet, and the superintendent of the hospital of the Coal and Iron Company in N—— began to tell his story.

"There is one great difficulty in the management of our hospital—lack of trained nurses. We have to depend for the greater part of our nursing upon the miners' widows, to whom the work in the hospital is a sort of pension. Most of them are good motherly souls—too good in fact, and you can't discipline them. They'll be kissing the homesick boys to comfort them and the result is that we get all sorts of epidemics going. We had to pass a strict rule that any nurse caught kissing a patient, whether suffering from a contagious disease or not, would be discharged on the spot.

"We had a typhoid fever epidemic and the hospital was crowded not only by our

men, but we had to let them bring the kids, for the only way to control the disease was to get them all rounded up.

“One of these widows was Mrs. McGinnis. Maggie I called her; for I knew her before she was married. She was our cook and when she left us it was like a funeral. Mrs. McGinnis’ husband was the foreman in one of our mines. The poor fellow went to help dig out some of those stupid foreigners and he and six other brave Irishmen ‘never drew breath outside of purgatory again,’ to quote Father O’Shanahan. I am no authority on the condition of souls in the other world.

“Maggie just hated ‘them Eyetalyuns and Polacks.’ She never had any particular love for them before her husband lost his life, but after that calamity, her hate grew fierce. ‘Doctor,’ she said when I asked her to help at the hospital, ‘I’d give them poison instead of medicine.’

“When I told her that that was just exactly what I wanted her to give them, she came. We needed her badly, we were just bulging with cases; we were ‘full up’ as the hotel

keepers in England tell you, when the last room in the garret is let.

"I put her in charge of the women's and children's ward and the first day that I asked her to carry a patient to the bath tub she rebelled.

" 'I thought you said you'd let me give them poison,' and she looked at me with her cold gray eyes, reprovngly. 'I'd like to throw them all into the river.'

"I told her that was just what I should want her to do. She could not carry them so far, but we would put them into the ice-cold water in the bath room. To this she consented with a fierce joy.

"The first patient was a little Polish girl. Reluctantly Maggie undressed her, complaining of the dirt and of getting sick at the stomach. But when the feverish head of the child touched her cool cheek, all the maternal spirit in Maggie responded.

" 'I felt as if a stone had dropped out of my heart when I felt that soft, hot cheek,' she said, and refused to put the child into the ice-cold bath until I sternly commanded her.

“ ‘Poor, poor kid,’ she said ; ‘them Polacks ain’t much on baths anyway, and now it’s freezin’ cold—the shock will kill her.’

“ ‘When the child was taken out of the bath and her fever so reduced that she realized where she was, she began to cry bitterly for her mother, and Maggie fretted and fumed about those heartless Polack mothers. ‘Catch an Irish mother leaving her kid this way all alone.’

“ ‘Her mother died, Maggie. They carried her out of here yesterday.’ Then you couldn’t get Maggie away from that child until I threatened to discharge her. When I left her for the night I told her some of the rules that govern the conduct of nurses in the hospital. ‘And remember,’ I said, ‘if you kiss one of the patients you’ll be discharged on the spot.’

“ ‘I knew Maggie’s temper ; but never before had I seen her quite so wrought up as she was that evening.

“ ‘Do you expect I’ll be kissin’ these Polacks or Eyetalyuns? Don’t you know that I am Irish born and raised and proud of it?

Haven't I got reason enough to hate them all? First they come and take the bread from we Americans, and then they kill my husband for me! I says to McGinnis when he went away to rescue them Polacks, "There ain't no Americans in the bunch," and then McGinnis——' Here Maggie began to cry, and knowing her capacity in that direction, I left her.

"She was getting along splendidly, the head nurse told me, and the patients liked her very much. One evening as I was coming from the lodge I thought I'd take a look into the hospital. When I came into the children's ward I saw Maggie with the little Polack girl in her arms. The child was calling piteously: '*Matushka! moya Matushka!*' and that big Irishwoman was crying like a baby and kissing the mouth of the sick child in direct violation of our rule. The head nurse was with me; so there was nothing to do but discharge Maggie. I'd rather have taken a whipping but it had to be done.

"Maggie laid the little girl in her bed; and then she looked at me, her gray eyes full of

tears. 'Do you think I am made of pig-iron to keep my hands and mouth from that baby, crying for its mother, and that mother dead?' She said it angrily and fiercely. Then pleadingly: 'Do you mean it, doctor? You can't mean it! I just couldn't stand it. That baby needed a kiss more than your poison or your cold baths. The Lord have mercy on this place if you can't kiss a baby that hasn't got no mother.'

" 'Its father comes around here and stands and stands like a tombstone, while the child cries for a kiss from its mother. I don't know any of their gibberish but I can tell what a child wants and what a child needs. McGinnis ——' and then of course she began to cry, and I had to push her out of the ward for she was exciting the patients, and the head nurse was growing apprehensive.

"Last winter we had another typhoid scare. They come now about every two years and we were again out of nurses. I thought of Maggie and went to her home. In the yard were some Polish children and knowing her aversion to them I was not a



"PART OF 'EM'S HSN, ANOTHER PART OF 'EM'S NINE AND ONE OF 'EM'S OURN"

little astonished. Playing with the Polish boys and girls were two, unmistakably Irish, and the Polish girl who seemed the oldest in the lot carried a baby. Maggie came to the door and I stated my errand.

“ ‘Come in, doctor. I am glad to see you. I don’t bear you no grudge if you did discharge me ; but I couldn’t go to that hospital to nurse.’

“ ‘Why not?’ I asked.

“ ‘Oh, well, you see, I’ve got a new boss and he might discharge me if I kissed the patients.’ She laughed her good Irish laugh. ‘I’ve started nursing again on my own hook,’ she continued ; ‘did you see the kids?’

“ ‘Yes ; whose are they?’

“ ‘Well,’ she said, ‘part of ’em’s hisn, another part of ’em’s mine and one of ’em’s ourn. The little one, he’s a cute one ; there never *was* such a fine baby.

“ ‘Yes,’ she said, when she saw the astonishment on my face ; ‘when you discharged me, and no blame to you neither, the Polack kid’s father came to my house and stood by

the kitchen door and said : “ *Dobre den,*” and I said : “ *Dobre devil.*” You know you can’t help learning some of their lingo. Then he said : “ How much ? ” and pointed to me, and I pushed him down the kitchen steps and slammed the door behind him.

“ ‘ A few months after, didn’t that Polack kid, who knocked me out of my job, come to see me and bring me a big bunch of flowers ! I didn’t know her till she told me who she was. She had grown a bit ; her hair was cut short and she looked so well. She wanted to hug me and then I remembered that McGinnis ——’

“ At the mention of the late lamented McGinnis’ name the tear-ducts properly opened. When Maggie had dried her eyes on her kitchen apron she continued :

“ ‘ When I remembered that McGinnis lost his life for them Polacks and that I lost my job for one of them, I just took that kid and told her to keep her flowers and not to come again till I sent for her. I was sorry when I saw her blubbering and when she reached the gate I remembered she didn’t have no

mother; so I called her back and gave her some tea and she was sort of companion like and my two kids took to her, and she kept on coming every day.

“ ‘ One day Father O’Shanahan sent for me. He is a nice man, the Father is; he married me and McGinnis ’—here she choked and the usual shower seemed imminent— ‘ he often sends for me to do a bit of cleaning, but you could have knocked me down flat; for there, with him, was the Polack and his three kids. That Polack kept smiling at me and his kid came and sat in my lap as if she belonged there, and the others came too. They didn’t smell a little bit, they were so nice and clean. Then Father O’Shanahan said some nice things about the Polack.

“ ‘ He said he had eight hundred dollars in the bank, and that he was a good Catholic and strictly well-behaved, except drinkin’ a little bit here and there.

“ ‘ I kind of saw what the holy Father was drivin’ at so I told him, with all respect, that I didn’t have no objections to the Po-

lack having eight hundred dollars in the bank, and that I was glad he was a good Catholic and sorry he drank ; but what could you expect from a Polander ?

“ ‘Then the holy Father’s face kind of sobered and he told me that McGinnis ’—and she cried again—‘ that McGinnis had given his life for these Polanders. Then I jumped up and made for the poor frightened wretch, but when I came up to him he fell down on his knees and got hold of my feet and began to kiss them and cried, “ *Dobra Panye, Dobra Panye !* ” and the little kid came and looked at me so kind of pleading like, and the other kids began to cry and then I cried too and then the holy Father could have done anything he wanted—and he *did*.

“ ‘So you see, doctor, I couldn’t go to do no nursing. Anyway I might kiss one of your patients and then there would be worse trouble than ever.’ ”



"HIS CHILDHOOD HAD BEEN IN A FOREIGN LAND"

IV

A Slavic Oklahoman

HE talked to me until dawn, and when he left me I could not sleep, for he had told me his own story ; how he had lost the name by which he was baptized, had forgotten his native tongue, had forsaken his mother's faith and but dimly remembered the name of his old home. For twenty years his mind and soul had been absorbed in Oklahoma ; her size, her wealth, her prospects.

My coming and speaking had recalled to him the fact that he was a Slav by birth, that his childhood had been in a foreign land, and that he once had a soul which reached beyond the desire to own fertile soil in his adopted state. He remembered that he had loved, and that his real name was not the one by which he was now known.

"I don't recall the name of our village," he said ; "but we had four days' journey to

Trieste and my name was Demetrius Gondory."

"Gondory," I said ; "then you are a Southern Slav ; because if you were from the North you would pronounce it softly with an H.

"Don't you remember anything of your language?"

"Yes," he said ; "I remember a song in my mother tongue." And he sang for me as we walked from the church to my hotel :

" Oh ! thou poor river Save
Fret not against thy shores."

From the song and the way he sang, I traced him to the shores of that mountain stream, where it is young and turbulent. He had never seen it where it broadens and carries ships to the ocean ; nor did he know the cities below it and above it, only the names of two mountains which overshadow his village. To him then, I recalled its name which has five consonants and only one vowel, but it was music to his ears and he repeated it a dozen times.

"That's it !" he cried ; "I could always see

it with my eyes but I could not speak it with my tongue.

"America," he said, "gives a man more than any other country, but it takes away more. It took from me my name, my native speech, my mother's faith ; it almost blotted out for me my cradle home, and what has it given me ?

"They call me John, although the priest baptized me Demetrius. They have filled my soul with the love of gold until it is like a cash register which responds only to the touch on the dollar key. My brain is full of the red dust of Oklahoma and they have put into my blood the love for a fight until I am like a bulldog. Say, I can't talk without snarling.

"I run a newspaper which is just a series of barks. They say it is picturesque for I use no dashes—I just give them God Almighty's Hell, and they seem to like it. Of course I have fought for some things worth while, and before I am through I am going to see a few of the gang in the penitentiary ; you may stake your bottom dollar on that.

“Now my story. The dominant feeling in my childhood was fear. Witches, devils, evil spirits of all sorts haunted me, and religion was the great bugaboo to drive away the other bugaboos. Say, I feel it creeping over me now, that old fear. Talk about devils! I can see their red, licking tongues of fire when I am alone in the dark—hundreds, thousands of them, and I am afraid that when the end comes, my fighting blood will turn to buttermilk, and I shall crawl back into the shelter of the Church.

“My mother was a sweet, timid creature; my father was brutal, and when I was not afraid of the devils I was afraid of him. I remember a phrase he used; it was something like this: ‘*Za decu je u zapecu mesto.*’ Do you know what it means?”

“Yes,” I replied. “The place for the children is behind the bake-oven.”

“Yes, that must be it, for he used to drive me behind an old brick oven which took up a third of the living-room. It was dark as a pocket, and hot as Hell and I could see noth-

ing but devils. When you hear me saying devil every other minute, remember that I have personal acquaintance with his Satanic Majesty, and that when I swear I mean no harm. I have heard all sorts of cuss words from the day I was born, and you know out here in Oklahoma they belong to the native dialect.

“My mother dedicated me to the Church to appease the devils that tormented her, and I became an acolyte at ten years of age. I fought the bunch of holy kids for the privilege of carrying the sacred water, or the censor; for only then did I feel safe.

“I don’t know how old I was when a wonderful thing happened to me—my uncle came back from America. He looked to me like a lord and he acted like one. He got the whole town drunk, he had the band playing for him all night, he swore at the gendarmes and he brought my mother a gold ring.

“He talked about nothing but America—his farm and mills. He said he had a flour mill, a sawmill, carriage and horses and cows, and so many pigs that he couldn’t

count them. He persuaded my father to let me go with him. An aunt of mine was going along to be his housekeeper, his wife having died, and I was to go as his adopted son and heir.

“ I must have strutted around that blessed town like a peacock. I put on woollen clothes and a black hat, and I wore real leather shoes for the first time in my life. My job as an acolyte went to a cousin of mine, who, before I left, sprinkled me all over with holy water to guard me against the evil spirits I might encounter. My mother wept and prayed, and made me kneel before the crucifix and promise two things, which she most feared might happen : never to forsake the Roman Catholic faith and not to marry an American wife.

“ My uncle lived in Illinois, in a most desolate and forsaken place. His farm was a poor, run-down affair and his mills consisted of a feed grinder under the roof of his barn, while the sawmill was a hand-saw and the usual buck.

“ I had to work hard ; plow the corn and

do the chores while my uncle frequented saloons in the neighbouring town. He took me there occasionally and regaled me with a glass or two of beer. There I learned my first English, and I collected such a fine lot of swear words that I have not had to learn much in that direction since.

“I grew physically like a weed; I had plenty to eat, good air and lots of exercise, but mentally and spiritually I didn’t grow an inch. I lived in the world of evil spirits, witches and devils which I brought with me and I did not have even the consolation of the incense and the holy water. My aunt and I went to church. The priest was German and I added a few words of his language to my own, but of the consolation of religion I received very little.

“One day my uncle, in a drunken fit, drove me from the farm. Most likely I was impudent for I am that now, to a superlative degree. I went to town and got a job in a saloon in which my uncle was a good customer. My work consisted in keeping the filthy barroom reasonably clean, and in wait-

ing on customers when the boss had imbibed too much of his own wet goods.

“I slept in the billiard room on a pool table, another one being a bed for the saloon-keeper’s brother who kept a butcher shop next door. He was a consumptive, and in the darkness of the night his hacking cough nearly drove me crazy. One night he bled to death right on that pool table and I was alone with him till morning. You can’t imagine with what horrors my whole being was filled.

“The night after the funeral as I lay there at midnight I would have given anything to have heard even the hacking cough of the consumptive. I saw nothing but corpses and spirits. I shook as if I had the ague. I grew desperate. I went behind the bar, took a box of sulphur matches and poured whiskey over them; it was the only poison of which I knew and I was about to drink it when I heard music, a waltz tune. I heard just as if it was a dream—it went to my brain and drove the witches and devils and the fear all out of me.

"I left the saloon and went after it. It came from the Masonic Hall up in the third story of the temple. I climbed up those stairs as if I were climbing to Heaven. Say, they may talk about us immigrants being illiterate but we know music, and that's culture.

"Music saved me from death, if from nothing else. I looked into that hall and to me it was like a king's chamber. The men and women who danced were as far removed from me as the saloon in which I worked was from the cloud under which cherubim and seraphim kneel before the ark.

"Do you know what the one thought was that held me and lifted me, and nearly saved me? To live! So to live that some day I should be worthy to mingle with those people. I stood entranced by the melody, the swaying bodies, the cleanliness and the beauty. I felt like a great poet must feel when he is lifted into his seventh heaven.

"There was one young girl upon whom my love-hungry eyes especially rested, and I said to myself—I don't know just why I said it—I shall dance with her some day in

this very room ; and who knows what she will say to me, and I will say to her? While I was held by the vision I was suddenly brought to earth by some one shouting : ‘Look at the funny little Dutchman!’ Then I bolted down-stairs, resolved not to be a Dutchman, and more strongly resolved to be a man.

“I could keep you here ten days telling you what happened in the next ten years. Jiminy crickets! I got the Dutchman or the Slav or whatever it is out of my nature. I climbed high enough to dance with that young woman in the same hall, or for all that with any young woman in that blooming town. I never entered that saloon nor any saloon. I was offered barkeeper’s wages; the beer brewer wanted me to work in his office. I think I might have managed to own the whole blasted brewery, but that music and that young woman led me on to better things.

“Of course it wasn’t anything big that I got to be; just a bookkeeper in a clothing store, but it’s heaps better than bottle washer

in a saloon, and I was climbing, you bet ! In six months I could talk English. I read like a fiend : Dickens, Longfellow, Old Homer, the Bible. I sat under an old oak tree one Sunday reading Longfellow's 'Muratori Salutamus,' and I cried like a baby, because its music ravished my ears and its pathos wrung my heart.

"*She* passed by and I joined her, and went to church with her, the first time I was in a Protestant church. They had a revival meeting on and they sang hymn tunes which first moved my feet as if I were going to dance, and then they began to grip my heart as if I should die unless I obeyed their pleading.

"Say, you may talk about that stuff not being good music ; it does the job just the same. That plaintive, 'Why not ?' 'Why not ?' sung by five hundred people, usually women and children, with their shrill voices which rack your nerves and make you feel like a sinner who is pursued by the devil—it's great music ; it was for me.

"I don't remember much of what the preacher said. It was about the devil and

Hell, about sin and perdition, and when he plead with men to repent I jumped up, and was the first one at the altar.

“I writhed like an epileptic on that floor. I tell you I know how all those great souls felt : St. Augustine, St. Francis and Luther, those who lived in the middle ages, for I had not outgrown them ; I was there. To me that was the first call to repentance, the first way of escape opened.

“I fought for hours with the devil who wanted me back ; I saw his licking tongue and when he couldn't prevail against me he called other devils to his aid. Then he called my mother and I saw her with her rosary in her hand kneeling with me and begging me not to forsake the Mother Church. I bolted for the door, but there *she* stood, the woman for whom my heart yearned, and she led me back and I found peace.

“I have read a whole lot of psychology since. I know William James almost by heart. I have outgrown all that emotional Methodism ; but as I think back I know that I stood on a pure mountain height, one which

I have never reached again, for I became like Lucifer ; but that's another story."

He chewed the end of his cigar nervously.

"Say, honestly, am I not boring you? I am talking to you as if you were my father confessor."

When I assured him that I was willing to stay awake all night to listen to him, he continued :

"That girl whom I loved as I have never loved since, wouldn't, couldn't marry me. She was much older ; she was rich, cultured, and I was still a rough human, no more a Slav and scarcely yet an American. I knew she did just the right thing, but she threw me over a precipice, and I never stopped falling till—well, I am ahead of my story.

"I began to drink and the old alcohol-soaked germs in me—my ancestors' drunken ghosts—cried for more and more, till I was again in the gutter. I drifted West further and further and got fairly on my feet in Kansas. I say on my feet. I was a boozier still, but I was among boozers.

"Say, those were wild days and great days.

I helped to make cities out of lonely prairies ; I moved county seats, and helped to elect Congressmen and United States Senators. The state was in a delirium and I helped to make that. People were real estate crazy and I acted like the craziest of them all.

“ We are a slow, sluggish race ; you said that to-night. I know how slow my own blood runs, but I out-Yankeed the Yankees in my pace ; not in the drinking line alone, nor in playing cards, though I could bluff them at their own game, but in that bigger game which they call business. Say, honest,” he said, “ you ought to go to bed ! ”

But he was so eager to tell and I was so eager to listen that he continued, although the porters were mopping the floor and moving the chairs, and were quite anxious to have us gone.

“ I began, as you know, as a farmer ; I became a bartender ; I then went into the clothing business. I have worked in a grocery store, slung hash in a restaurant, driven cabs, carried hods. I owned a pantatorium, then I became a reporter. Honestly, I believe I was

at every kind of business except selling subscription books and life insurance.

“Talk about the immobility of the Slav ! They have made mercury out of the iron in me. I am sure my pulse goes a good many beats faster than the Creator ordained it should. I have travelled through every state in the Union, and I have not bought a burial lot yet, for I’ll be sluggish if I know where I want to wait for Gabriel’s trumpet.

“Once I made a big pile of money, and I went back to Illinois, for I had not forgotten *her*, never for a minute. Talk about your great emotions ! Is there anything bigger, do you think, than that going back to where you were born, I mean consciously born, born again ? Where at sixteen years of age you crawled out of the womb of ignorance and superstition, and began to live, intellectually and spiritually ?

“I have a sneaking notion, now that I have heard you speak of us Slavs, that I want to go back to where my body was born, and where she who bore me lies buried, but I am sure it couldn’t mean as much to me as that

other going back meant. No one recognized me. I had grown from a youth into a man, into an old man almost, for I had gone the pace which crowds years into a calendar page.

“I went out to the farm first. I hired a carriage to take me, the kind they use at funerals and weddings. The old man still lived ; he looked exactly like his farm, seedy and broken down, run down at the heel. I thanked God for the deliverance from that place and that kind of life.

“I then went to the saloon ; it had prospered to the degree that my uncle’s farm had deteriorated. There were fine pictures, plate glass, and a barkeeper in a white jacket. I then went to the clothing store. It also had changed and changed for the better. And then I went to see *her*.

“I rang the door-bell and waited for her in the parlour. She came. There was a cherub of a baby in her arms, and a three-year-old kid was pulling at her skirts as if determined to pull them off. She didn’t recognize me, and I made for the door,

stammering apologies. She must have thought me crazy.

“ I went up to the dance hall in the Masonic Temple and I cried right there by the closed doors. I guess it's easier for a Slav to cry than for a Yankee. Then I made for the tree under which I used to read poetry, and I had a good look at the Methodist church, and there too I blubbered like a baby. I left the town as soon as I could, and going through Chicago the old devils got hold of me again and I blew in every cent I had—I needn't tell you how.

“ Then I came to this blooming town and slept on this very hill where this hotel stands, but there was nothing above me but the stars, and under me the red soil of Oklahoma. There was red soil over me too, for the wind blew great guns, and I swallowed dirt enough to feel that I was the owner of some real estate at least, even if I didn't have a red copper in my pocket.

“ It's different now. I am a stockholder in this hotel; I own a printing shop and a newspaper. They call me a scrapper and I

am. I have fought and am still fighting. I have made enemies enough so that I have to keep in fighting trim all the time. You will hear lots of lies about me, but no one will tell you that I haven't fought fair. I could have sold myself and my interests a dozen times ; I have refused to touch their dirty money. I have fought for the farmers ; say, I am a farmer still at heart. My ancestors, you said, were an agricultural people."

"Yes," I replied, "they were people of the plow and not of the sword."

"That's right," he said. "I am a child of the soil ; I feel it in my blood. I have started more fights than a bulldog, but from what you said to-night I fight like a Slav, clumsily and ill-sustained. I lack confidence in myself and in others. The only thing I have confidence in is this blooming state.

"It's bound to be the greatest state in the Union, the centre of population. It has the soil and the climate. It can raise better cotton than Louisiana ; it beats Nebraska for corn and California for fruit. It has them

all beaten, for we have two crops on top of the soil and three crops beneath it: coal, gas and oil, and then our natural resources are not yet developed."

He talked fifteen minutes more about Oklahoma; her constitution, her schools and churches, and then I laid my hand upon his shoulder and looking into his face, aglow from the enthusiasm of his deliverance, I said:

"Verily, Demetrius Gondory, thou art an American."

V

Mules and the Tolstoy Doctrine.

“**T**HEY may call that man Tolstoy a crank, but by ginger! cranks who make their own trail often strike a lead, while the fellow who travels on the pike never comes in sight of pay dirt. You made me like that man, by ginger!”

The speaker was a typical Westerner who, in this unceremonious fashion, addressed me after I had delivered a lecture on the great Russian.

“By ginger!” he continued, “here is another crank; take a good look at him.”

I did as I was bid. His was a shrewd but kindly face; one might almost have called it the face of a dreamer, had the eyes been less piercing and the lips less firmly set.

“Why do they call me a crank? I guess because I believe that mules have at least mule sense if they haven’t got horse sense, and that they are just like folks; some good and

some bad, and that when they are real bad, it's the fault of folks instead of their maker.

"Say, if you are not afraid of 'lungers' come out to my ranch to-morrow. If my mules don't interest you the 'lungers' will. The mules come all the way from Spain to Missouri, and the 'lungers' are international too. Roosians, Germans, Yankees, Jews and Gentiles—no Mormons or Turks. They call my place the 'International Mule and Lungers' Institute,' and I am the president. No real full-fledged president. I haven't got a degree and I don't go asking nobody for money."

The ranchman was pushed aside as I shook hands with men and women who uttered the usual kind commonplaces. Out of that mass, I remember one other person ; a Jew with a massive, broad skull towering over a face more Slavic than Semitic. His cheeks were deep sunken, his back was bent and he had the peculiar gait which marks those who have had to "Walk softly all their days."

"I want to shake the hand which has touched that of the great Tolstoy," he said in broken English as he came close to me.

He would have passed on, but I detained him. His hand resting in mine was cold and clammy, and although I am not a physician, my finger sought his pulse and I knew that he was a very sick man.

"I am a threefold exile," he said; for he understood the meaning of that touch. "I am a Jew, a revolutionist and a consumptive. There are many of us here and we would appreciate it very much if you would come to see us. Just ask for the 'Lungers' Institute'; any one will show you the way."

I did not need any one to show me the way, for the president of the "International Mule and Lungers' Institute" sent his "kid" with a coach and team after me. It did not matter much that the coach was a two-wheeled cart and the team a pair of Rocky Mountain burros. The cart was fairly comfortable, and the burros went without having to be damned a thousand times or kicked or pushed into mobility. Not more than a dozen times did the beasts stop to nibble at the harsh, dry grass, and each time they started, after a strong pull at the bits. No whip was used;

for there was none, and as for profanity, not once did the "kid" go beyond his father's "by ginger."

The drive ended upon a treeless plateau surrounded by fantastic rock shapes, thrown up, torn up—restless looking heaps of stones, typical of the race which inhabits the continent. Among the rocks stood the rancher's home; a modest, far-stretching building, and behind or rather to one side of it was the "International Institute," its corral dormitories full of melancholy looking mules, burros and donkeys.

It was indeed an "International Institute." There were white Egyptian donkeys whose ancestors bore upon their backs kings and potentates. Their relatives now carry globe trotters past the silent Sphinx to the foot of the great pyramids.

There were black trimmed, gray donkeys who might have pulled heavy blocks of marble through the streets of Carrara; Spanish jacks, the aristocrats of donkey-dom—large, stately creatures; and there were just mules, without pedigree and without progeny.

In them all, the pathetic and the ridiculous ; the wise and the stupid ; the gentle and the vicious ; the industrious and the lazy touched and overlapped so closely, that I realized how easily one usually recognizes only their poor qualities.

“ What can you expect ? ” the president of the mule college replied, answering my audible musings. “ An ass ! Who ever has spoken a good word of an ass ? Of course it’s stubborn, why shouldn’t it be ? We’ve whipped it and whipped it, by ginger ! we’ve whipped the manhood out of it. We’ve whipped all our cussedness into it, and every once in a while, in its dumb brute way, it remembers what we have done for it and all its kin, and it puts its legs astraddle and its head to the ground, and lets its back down till its belly touches the ground, and it says to itself : ‘ Now you just kick and swear and swear and kick, and by ginger ! I won’t move for you, not one inch, you man brute you ! ’ ”

“ They never forget when you’ve done them harm. They may have little brain but they’ve got big ears and a mighty whole lot

more goes into those ears than you think, and stays there through many generations. The other day one of my men stooped to lift a dragging rein, and one of those burros hit him, with the forefoot, mind you, right in the head. When he came to, I said to him : 'Have you hit that beast lately?' He couldn't remember, he felt so swimmy, but in the evening he came and confessed. About six weeks before, he had kicked that mule in the ribs. 'Now you're even,' I said ; 'don't you try that kind of a trick again or else you may hit the road, you tramp you !'

"I'll show them to you at their best," he said. "It's about time for the daily review." I followed him across the dusty yard. He dropped the top rail from the corral and gave a peculiar call which I suppose meant in donkey language, "come on." They jumped over the two rails which separated them from their master and crowded rather uncomfortably close to the visitor.

"No crowding now, boys !" He looked at them and moved his hand commandingly. At once the crowd of asses fell back and

came out one by one, following the leader, Indian file.

Waving his hand, the ranchman spoke again and the leader turned ; while with military precision the big and little asses followed him. They turned again, then faced us and reversed, after which each one received a handful of alfalfa hay, and they were let into the enclosure once more ; although not without lingering on the way, to sniff the ground and pull at the dry tufts of grass.

“ I’m not trying any high jinks with them ; they’re just mules ; but I can break ’em and bust ’em without cussin’ and whippin’, and by ginger ! I can do it every time. They haven’t forgotten yet that they have a business end ; they’re not angels yet and you have to watch the hind quarter of some of them ; for there are mules and mules, just as there are folks and folks. Say, that old fellow in Roosia, what’s his name ? Tol—how do you pronounce it ? ”

I helped him out : “ Tolstoy.”

“ Yes, he is right, even if I can’t pronounce his name. Love is stronger than hate, and a

kind word goes further with any beast than a cussin' or a whippin'. He may be a little forehanded wanting to do away with the police and the prisons ; folks are so cussedly used to 'em they think they can't keep straight without 'em ; but by ginger ! if one generation of asses can be kept straight without kickin' and cussin'—although, of course, asses is asses and folks is folks.

“They call me a sentimental cuss out here because I'm not handy with the whip or with cuss words ; but by ginger ! it takes some strength to keep your hand from grabbin' the whip every time a mule gets busy with his hind quarters ; and as to swearin', by ginger ——”

There was an eloquent pause and I knew how hard it was even that minute for him to keep from it.

“I just got to bite my tongue,” he continued, “and then I remember that it isn't for any mortal to damn anything or anybody, and that you ought not to take the Lord's name upon your lips when they are dirty with meanness.

"You just tell that man in Roosia that I have tried his medicine on mules and it works all right, but that it doesn't work quite so well among the humans.

"Say, my aggregation of 'lungers' live together as if each one of them were guarding an international boundary. I had to separate them the other day. The Gentiles wouldn't live with the Jews. The crankiest of the whole lot are those who are going to Kingdom Come, lickety split; they want to die hating each other. By ginger! mules is angels compared with folks; I can't understand it."

My host pointed the way to the Jewish colony where I expected to find my acquaintance of the evening before. I had already left the precincts of the "Mule Institute" when he called after me: "Say, you needn't believe every word those Jews tell you. They're a mighty sensitive lot and they can imagine more in one day than can happen in a year. Good-bye. Come again."

I went back through the canyon which separated the mules from the humans, and a

short distance up the old Mormon trail, passing beneath those restless mountain walls in which no two rocks lie peacefully upon one another. Struggling and quarrelling in some dumb, stony way, they make room for the wind to blow in, to carry away the binding soil between, and for the rain to rush through in torrents so that nature may make dust for the valleys, out of the proud Rocky Mountains.

No more desolate spot can be imagined than that Jewish division of the "Lungers' Institute." It is a bit of treeless and grassless plain, with a few scattered outbuildings, rudely constructed, and the house on the edge of a cliff between the roadway and a deep canyon.

"It wasn't much of a place this," my host greeted me with apology, "and all they wanted out of it was health; for each member of the colony traded in the surrounding mining camps and thus managed to make a living. None of them was fitted for manual labour, which was both hard and irksome, and although peddling was no easy task, it had

its chance of loss and gain and brought one in contact with men and affairs."

It was a typical group of Russian Jews which gathered around the samovar after supper. They all drank glass after glass of steaming tea, all smoked cigarettes, all talked at once and all talked well. They spoke of their day's business, of course, and of that no Jew ever speaks hopefully. It is a remnant of the old Asiatic superstition which always speaks ill of that which it wishes well, and *vice versa*; but it may have a later interpretation in the Jew's necessity for hiding his prosperity from his Gentile neighbour.

No one is deceived, though, by that shrug of the shoulders and those downcast looks, and secretly every man in that group was computing just how much jewelry and dry-goods he had sold during the week, as they climbed the mountainsides between Denver and Cripple Creek.

And yet, everybody had to believe what Isaac Ragowsky said; for he was new to America and to the peddling business, and had not yet learned the tricks of the trade.

A student in the engineering school at Moscow, of a wealthy, cultured family at Minsk, he fled to New York after losing his all, during the recent disorders. There he "sweated" and coughed and coughed and "sweated," until the members of the revolutionary group sent him to Colorado.

"I am done with your peddling business," he said. "Any one who wants to take my pack may have it. I'll go to Denver and work at anything ; but no more peddling for me—I have been 'Sheenyd' long enough. To-day I came to a ranch, and when the woman saw me she said : 'Get out of here, you Sheeny, or I'll set my dogs on you.' She didn't have to say it twice ; I went. I hadn't gone five steps when her husband came along, and said to her, 'Why do you send that poor beggar away? Give him something to eat.' That was worse than the 'Sheeny' business."

He put a lump of sugar into his glass, moodily sipped his tea and pulled at his unlighted cigarette.

"You'll be 'Sheenyd' more when you go

to work in a shop," said another one of the group. "I am a machinist and when I went to work in Pueblo, the whole shop kicked. The men didn't want to work with a 'Sheeny.' Now I am in business and at least the man who sells me goods treats me decently. He calls me Mr. Rosenthal. He doesn't call me 'Sheeny'—not when I am around, and if a man who buys goods of me calls me that, he pays for it, you bet he does."

"But they have 'Sheenyd' us here, haven't they?" some one suggested.

That opened wide the discussion of the question of race hate to which they had repeatedly fallen victims, and I was asked whether I thought it was growing or diminishing.

I said that it is growing, and I gave my reasons. "First, because race consciousness is growing stronger in the United States, and that all people who show decided race peculiarities are put outside the sphere of common sympathies. In that respect a Jewish face and name are handicaps to be reckoned with.

“Second, the large number of Jews congregating in the cities helps to preserve and emphasize those characteristics which are disagreeable to the American people.

“Third, the success attained by the Jew in business lends colour to the idea that he uses shady methods ; thus strengthening prejudice in some people and often awakening it in others, because of the competition they have to suffer from the Jews. In a word, there are three great reasons.

“First, the Jew is unlike the American physically ; he is an Oriental still.

“Second, his mental attitude is different from that of the American. He is all emotion, he is aggressive, he carries his heart on his sleeve ; while the American is cool and reserved and likes to keep at arm’s length from his neighbour.

“Third, he is a keen business man and presses the Yankee close in nearly all avenues of trade.”

It was something like a class-room lecture which I delivered, and strange to say I was listened to respectfully and without interrup-

tion ; but when I had finished, the storm broke loose.

“Who compelled us to be different, and kept us so?”

“Who locked us into Ghettos and put badges on us, and made us love trade?”

“To the Gentile,” I continued, “it makes no difference who made you what you are, or what the causes which produced your faults. He takes you as you are. He doesn’t stop to call history to account ; the individual has no time for that. These ‘lungers’ who made you move on, and who don’t want to have anything to do with you, merely followed their impulses. They don’t want you, that’s all.

“I don’t apologize for them ; they lack the Christian virtue, patience, which in its unhurried way looks forward and backward and all around,—and of humility which looks within, to discover its own racial fault ; and thus upon the lowlier plane make contacts which were impossible before.

“Christianity,”—they all scoffed at the word.

“Were they not locked into Ghettos by Christian rulers?”

“Even here were they not hated and ostracized by people of that faith?”

All of them talked excitedly and agreed among themselves upon one thing only: that Christianity as they knew it is a cruel, merciless fact; and that the Christianity which I talked about is the belief of a few, and the practice of fewer still.

They all held the larger faith in a common humanity; for they were nearly all dreamers of dreams, who had risked fortune, home, life itself—and each one of them would have gladly purged himself of racial faults to make contact with other humans possible. But could they? Was it not all unalterably fixed in their natures?

I left the Jewish “lungers” and went across the canyon which separated them from their companions in the struggle with disease. The canyon is a wound in the breast of Mother Earth. What mysterious force cut thus deeply into it I knew not. Ages of fretting waters have worn it and

torn it, compelled by the same mighty power. "Is there a force," I asked myself, "which can heal the bruise and compel the cleft in the rock to disappear?"

"Stone is sundered from stone, although the same forces shaped them and still are moving within them. Shall they ever be united?"

It all seemed so hopeless to me—this yearning of mine for brotherhood. Those Jews and Gentiles were as far apart as the rocks, and as immovable. The differences must be as deep and irreconcilable as the mysterious canyon.

"Yet," I said to myself, "it is the same stone on either side, some of it harder, exposed less to wind and rain—the other softer, ready to yield to the firm touch working upon it for ages. The difference is only a difference of time and sun and wind—not of the stone. It is so with these men, unwilling or unable to live or die together. Will they not some day realize this inner unity?"

I climbed the other side of the steep canyon deep in thought, and before I knew it I was

in the Gentiles' camp—the camp from which the Jews were separated. Here too were men—nothing more or less than men, about to die. Mere skeletons they were, with wasted bodies and sunken eyes; yet with energy enough left to hate—or call it by a better name if you can: still full of prejudice, although their breath was laboured and their pulse-beat weak.—Yes, I found the hate in them as deep as the fissure in the rock and as unhealing.

* * * * *

“Is the future then all dark?” “Is there to be no Kingdom of God on earth?” Then into this one hopeless moment of mine came the braying of the asses—that ridiculous, yet painful call of those painfully ridiculous beasts; I remembered what I had seen accomplished by love among asses and I said: “I will keep on trying it among men.”

VI

When Miss Mary Passes

THE woman with a great purpose need never grow old, and she may be assured of ever renewing beauty if she be concerned for the well-being of those less fortunate than herself. Women, to whom the experiences of wifehood and motherhood are denied, may feel all the joy and the pain of both, in a life of service which calls for the exercise of all human virtues and which will bring into play all the deeper emotions.

These seeming platitudes forced themselves upon me as I walked one day with her whom the children ran after and called "Miss Mary"; while they kissed her hands as reverently as they might have kissed the hands of that Mary whom their parents called the "Mother of God."

Young men and young women came to

her asking advice and confessing faults, with more confidence than they ever felt in approaching that sacred, solemn place where sins were forgiven them in the name of the Just Judge.

Miss Mary was *Mater Dolorosa* often—at birth and death. When there was a storm on the matrimonial sea, the unhappy ones called on her in their distresses, instead of upon the saint who has especial charge over conjugal difficulties.

Miss Mary lives in an eastern suburb, and were she asked to describe her neighbours, she would call them lovely; which means that they are all stylishly and properly gowned, that all of them own their homes, and that they can observe the social amenities towards each other, without condescension or fear of being snubbed. In fact if any one speaks of that suburb it is always "lovely."

It is "far from the madding crowd," yet easily reached by express trains; it has beautiful homes, built under restrictive rules, so that it always felt as safe from vulgar dis-

play as from the invasion of factories and crowding tenements. But the power to restrict and restrain extended only to the town limits, and there, as close as the well-defined line would permit, a silk-mill was to be erected, much to the chagrin of the "lovely" people of the "lovely" suburb.

"Of course," the women said, "a silk-mill isn't as bad as a steel-mill"—and they comforted themselves by a vision of beautiful buildings standing in the midst of a magnificent garden where mulberry trees and trailing vines and flowers grew. In imagination they saw the garden full of graceful Italian women in picturesque costumes, gathering cocoons from the trees; while others spun silvery sheets of shining silk, singing the while of 'Italia, Italia'!

"Just think of wearing dresses of silk woven almost at our very door!" Thus said the "lovely" women of the "lovely" suburb.

When Miss Mary in her carriage passed the silk-mill for the first time, she was properly shocked at seeing an ugly, box-like building

as close to the roadway as it could crowd. The window-panes were splashed over by whitewash, to admit a maximum of daylight and to permit a minimum waste of time on the part of those who toiled within, and who might long for a glimpse of the beautiful out-of-doors.

This was the silk-mill, and behind it stood a row of tenements as close as possible to the dusty road and to one another. Factory waste, empty tin cans, uncut weeds and stagnant sewage flanked the tenements; while any view of the "lovely" homes of the "lovely" people was shut out by a hill denuded of its verdure, barren and forbidding.

Miss Mary's coachman, at her bidding, drove over the rough road and past the tenements. Half-clad, dirty little Italian children drew back shyly at her approach; angry eyes watched her from the small windows, and the men she met looked sullenly at her.

When she returned from her calls she passed the mill again, although not from choice; she had to pass it. The six-o'clock whistle blew, and while it was blowing the

doors of the mill swung open and dark-eyed girls, half-grown children, and bent old women stepped eagerly out into the air, fresh and fragrant from the hills. Their hair, their garments, their very eyebrows were full of clinging dust, the colour was gone from their cheeks and even the young girls walked wearily over the rough road to the waiting tenements.

That night when the maid shook out the folds of Miss Mary's silken gown under the glare of the brilliant light, it looked to its wearer gray and lustreless, like the pale cheeks and dull eyes of the women who had woven it for her.

* * * * *

The people of the "lovely" suburb were greatly disturbed. There was a strike at the silk-mill and there was violence. Breathlessly the "lovely" women spoke to each other of Anarchists, bombs and daggers. None of them passed by the silk-mill while the strike lasted, except Miss Mary. She went into the tenement houses unafraid, and

by her sympathetic questions drew forth the story.

In broken sentences they told her that the hours were long, and the wages small; when one bent harder to the task, and summoning all of will and strength, earned a pittance more, the price per piece was cut, until there was no living on the wage.

It was true that men came from the neighbouring city and spoke to them of violence and lawlessness, but they did not listen. They went to the "boss" and asked for a better wage and steadier work, but he told them roughly to go to work or quit.

Thousands of their kind were landing every day, and the next morning their places in the ugly mill were taken by stolid Polish women, whose clumsy fingers were slowly being broken to the task.

There was a fight and that was what disturbed the "lovely" people in the "lovely" suburb. They heard a mixture of Slavic and Latin curses and they were told of bloodshed; for the Italians fought for the shelter from which they were driven and for their daily

bread which they had no more opportunity to earn.

The Poles moved into the tenements out of which the Italians were driven, and again the whirr of wheels began ; again half-naked children played on the barren hillside and again Miss Mary passed. This time she knew how dark were the mills where bright silks were woven, how pale the cheeks of those who spun the silvery strands, and she smiled at the stolid women as she stopped to play with the children. Every time her carriage came near they crowded around it, calling: " Miss Mary ! Miss Mary ! "

One day the doors of the tenements did not open when she passed ; for on most of them were yellow cards which meant that the death angel was hovering near, and must be alone with his victims.

Miss Mary went to the city and returned with white-capped nurses. Skillful physicians came and went regularly, but in spite of their efforts, the death angel did his work, and clay mounds rose on the potter's field and little wooden crosses marked the resting places

of strange children. Although there was great mourning among the people and great fear, the wheels still turned, the spindles danced, and the soft silken threads were woven into cloth of joy.

When Miss Mary passed again, only a few children were playing on the barren hillside, not far from the yellow mounds over which the weeds were growing, and this time she went into the tenements.

The women wept when they saw her, for they remembered how the children loved her, and although they could not speak her language, her tears and theirs spoke of their common woe.

They led Miss Mary from tenement to tenement and showed her why the death angel had been so cruel to them. The drains were all clogged, and the cellars were full of sewage, so that the pestilence had full sway and walked forth, to-day as Diphtheria, to-morrow as Typhoid, and the next day as Scarlet Fever.

Miss Mary went to the "boss" and this time she grew angry in her womanly majesty

when the proud master spoke of those "dirty Polanders who loved filth and delighted to live in dirt."

She appealed to the health officer, and he came and went, leaving behind him odours of disinfectants ; but the drains were left twisted and broken and the filth began to accumulate again.

Then there was another strike. The sluggish Poles were maddened by the shrinking wage, and the growing tasks, and one morning the tenements were empty and the mill was silent a while.

Again Miss Mary passed and again little children were playing in the roadway and on the hillside. They were as dirty as the other children had been ; but these were beautiful and friendly. Great, dark Oriental eyes they had, and curly hair. They spoke a strange, guttural tongue, and they called each other by Bible names ; for they all had come from round about the Holy Hills where the great revelations were made to men ; where Holy Laws were let down from Heaven and where the shepherds had heard the angels

sing of "Peace on Earth and Good Will to Men."

In the tenements sad-eyed women began the battle against poverty, dirt and disease. This time Miss Mary told their plight to the "lovely" women of the suburb and they built a home opposite the ugly silk-mill. There were bright rooms with baths and games, and beautiful pictures on the walls, and the "lovely" women ministered to their sisters who wove the garments of splendour for a pittance of wage.

One of these "sisters" in the silk-mill had a mother and little brothers and sisters to support. She was strong and brave and her fingers flew nimbly among the spindles. When the others began to complain she said: "Be patient, it will be better;" but the wage grew smaller and smaller and conditions harder.

One day I walked with Miss Mary past the silk-mill. As we neared the tenements, windows were opened, and friendly voices cried: "How do you do, Miss Mary?" She called them all by name, and smiled back a cheery "How do you do?"

The children came running out of the houses, down the steep hillside, and clinging to her skirts cried: "Come to my house, Miss Mary."

"Come see my mother!" "Come to my house and see the new baby!" "Come to my house and see two babies!" She was captured by the children.

In the first place we entered, the mother was standing over a wash-tub by the hot stove in a small kitchen; "Miss Mary!" she said with deep reverence. She quickly dried her soapy hands, and made her obeisance, then led us into the one other room—living-room, parlour and bedroom. She drew back the covers of the bed, saying: "See, Miss Mary!" It was a quilt Miss Mary had given her. Then she pointed to pretty, dainty curtains, also Miss Mary's gift. Everything that she touched was connected with the sacred name of Miss Mary.

We went to the home of the one baby, and found it swaddled in clothing Miss Mary had provided. All the mother felt she expressed in the two words "Miss Mary," and

she breathed into that name unspeakable gratitude.

We went into the home in which there were two babies ; here, even as there was a double portion of responsibility and burden, Miss Mary had brought a double portion of gifts.

From house to house we went, and the "Queen of Heaven" cannot receive homage more genuine than this Protestant Virgin Mary received from these women of the Holy Land.

The last house by the road was the home of the brave young girl who had tried to teach her comrades patience. The home was clean and beautiful, the mother smiled at Miss Mary and bowed low before her as she kissed the hem of her garment. Then the whistle blew and the breadwinner came home. She threw herself exhausted upon a chair—not without greeting her Miss Mary with a friendly hand-shake. "It's all over," she said ; "to-morrow the strike begins."

She could not hold them back this time. She had not strength enough to try. Even she, although she was given the best work,

could not make more than seven dollars a week. There were four of them in the home, and they wanted to live like human beings.

"No, Miss Mary, it's all up. To-morrow I am going to New York. There is a Syrian there who will let me have a satchel full of fancy work and I shall go peddling. I know you will buy of me, Miss Mary, and your good friends will buy of me. I don't like to do it, but I must."

The next day the Syrians struck, and no violence followed. The sad-eyed women and children moved out, no one knew where. Regularly they come, now one, now another, with heavy satchels upon their backs to the homes in the "lovely" suburb. The "lovely" ladies buy of their needy sisters and they move on to other suburbs where their plight is not known, and where the doors are often shut in their faces.

* * * * *

With hope, courage, strength and cheer, another group of men, women and children has come from Ellis Island to the station of the "lovely" suburb. Their eyes are dazzled



"SOON THERE WILL BE SILENCE WHICH WILL DEEPEN INTO
SULLENNESS AND END IN REVOLT"

by the evidences of wealth everywhere, and they dream that wealth will soon be theirs also. Servian women old and young are now working in the silk-mill, winding silvery strands and weaving endless yards of shining stuffs, for garments of splendour.

Little children are playing upon the barren hillsides, forgetting their villages by the Danube, set in the midst of gardens of roses, and fields of waving maize. In the tenements, mothers begin to wash and cook and bear children. In the silk-mill young girls who have just begun their task are singing as they work, but soon there will be silence which will deepen into sullenness and end in revolt.

Miss Mary comes and goes ; but she feels the hopelessness and the endlessness of her task. What can she do for these who come to weave our pleasure garments, yet must be clothed by cast-off garments of charity ?

She can feed this one or that one when the mill is shut down ; she can look after foul drains and ill-smelling cellars, and try to teach rapacious landlords their responsibility

for the public health—but the wrong itself remains unchanged. It is all there just “as it was in the beginning—is now and ever shall be.”

When I suggested Browning's Pippa, Miss Mary said, with an air of finality born of despair :

“ I know that ‘ God's in His Heaven,’ and therefore I also know that ‘ All's ’—*not*—‘ right with the world.’ ”

VII

*Dobra*¹ *Bridget*

HE did not talk to me longer than ten minutes. She talked much longer. He spoke in broken English ; strong, heavy words, which came slowly like sledgehammer blows. She spoke fluently, colloquially ; in such language as one might hear anywhere, from the basement of a department store to the loft of a sweat shop, socially, and from Pittsburg to Chicago, geographically.

He was standing by the covered hatchway of the steerage, in a sunny although somewhat malodorous spot, trying to mend a broken cigar ; I rescued him from the hopeless task by offering him one of such size and colour that he lifted his hat to me with much grace, no doubt suspecting behind the gift a wealthy giver.

There were two unmistakable signs of his

¹ Good.

having been in the United States before. The sleeve of a clean under vest had crept out over his wrist, and he wore shoes, broad soled and well formed. These two symbols of new standards of living were so significant that one might indeed stop to reflect on their far-reaching effect upon the world.

This is what *he* said; not exactly all he said; for half of his vocabulary consisted of certain picturesque words which Anglo-Saxon literary standards decree should be printed in dashes. In substance he said:

“Me go America—sick year. Modder he cry—say: ‘No go America’—I say, ‘Go America. Good-bye.’

“Work mills—lots money—lots meat, lots beer, whiskey. No Polish girl. Work to Irishman—nice man—Catolic, same me. Say: ‘Joe, hella to fellow mit da drink, stop drink.’

“I say: ‘Workata lot—money—go church Sunday. Notin to do—drink after go church.’ Irishman say, ‘After church go a mit mine house.’ I go him house.

“Irishman got a girl. Me work mills, lots money, lots meat, no beer. Money go bank,

go church Sunday, no go saloon. Go Irishman house.

“Ask Irishman girl marry me. She laugh. Say : ‘Marry Polack?’

“I say : ‘Me love same Irishman—Americ—Sheeny—Dago—Dutch—Polack—all same, all *man*. America, Catolic, Pravo-Slav (Greek Orthodox), Salvatch (Salvation Army),—all same God, all same man. God love Irish, same love Polack—same love Dago—same love Sheeny—all same love. Me bad, same bad Irish,—same bad Dago—same bad Sheeny—marry me?’

“She say : ‘Ask old man !

“Me say : ‘Old man—work mill—lots money, lots meat, go church, no whiskey. Irish girl marry Polack?’

“He say : ‘Ask Bridget.’

“She say : ‘Ask old man.’

“Old man say : ‘All right.’

“Bridget say : ‘All right.’

“License man say : ‘All right.’

“Priest say : ‘Polack and American girl no good marry. Polack drink, Polack beat wife,—much whiskey.’

“I say, ‘No drink—no beat wife. Jesus, Maria and Joseph!’ Then priest say: ‘All right.’

“Polacks laugh wedding out—laugh carriage out—no whiskey, no fight—wedding no good—all right.

“My old man write—old country: ‘No good marry America girl—modder he cry—he say. Marry one year—modder die.’ Old man write come home—go home.

“Fadder see Bridget—no good. He say, ‘No good—fine hands—fine dresses—no work hard—no wife Polack.’

“I say, ‘All right, old man—*my* wife.’ He say: ‘All right.’

“Stay one mont, stay two mont, stay tree mont.

“Fadder say: ‘No good America—girl no good—he cry—he say no drink whiskey—no beat wife—no work hard—no good—go back America.’

“I say: ‘All right, old man—me go back.’

“Old man say: ‘Stay old country—send back America wife.’

“I say: ‘Go hell—*my* wife.’

"He say : 'Go back all.'

"I say : 'All right—go back.'

"Stay four mont, five mont, old man say :
'Nice wife America—nice wife—clean good
wife—make no trouble, talk no trouble—
make women clean, make babies clean.'

"I say : 'All right.' Bridget sick—say
America go—I say : 'All right, America go.'

"Old man cry—say : 'Stay old country.'

"I say : 'No, America wife sick—Polish
grub no good—go back America.'

"'All right,' say old man.

"Go away America—old man cry—say :
'Go along America.'

"'No,' I say ; 'old man no good America.
—America go hella—go fast—old man slow.
All right. Good-bye.' Women cry—childer
cry. Old man cry much. Go cars Hamburg
—go ship Hamburg—there ship—there old
man—say, 'Go along America.'

"I say : 'All right.'

"He say : 'Go along Dobra Bridget.' "

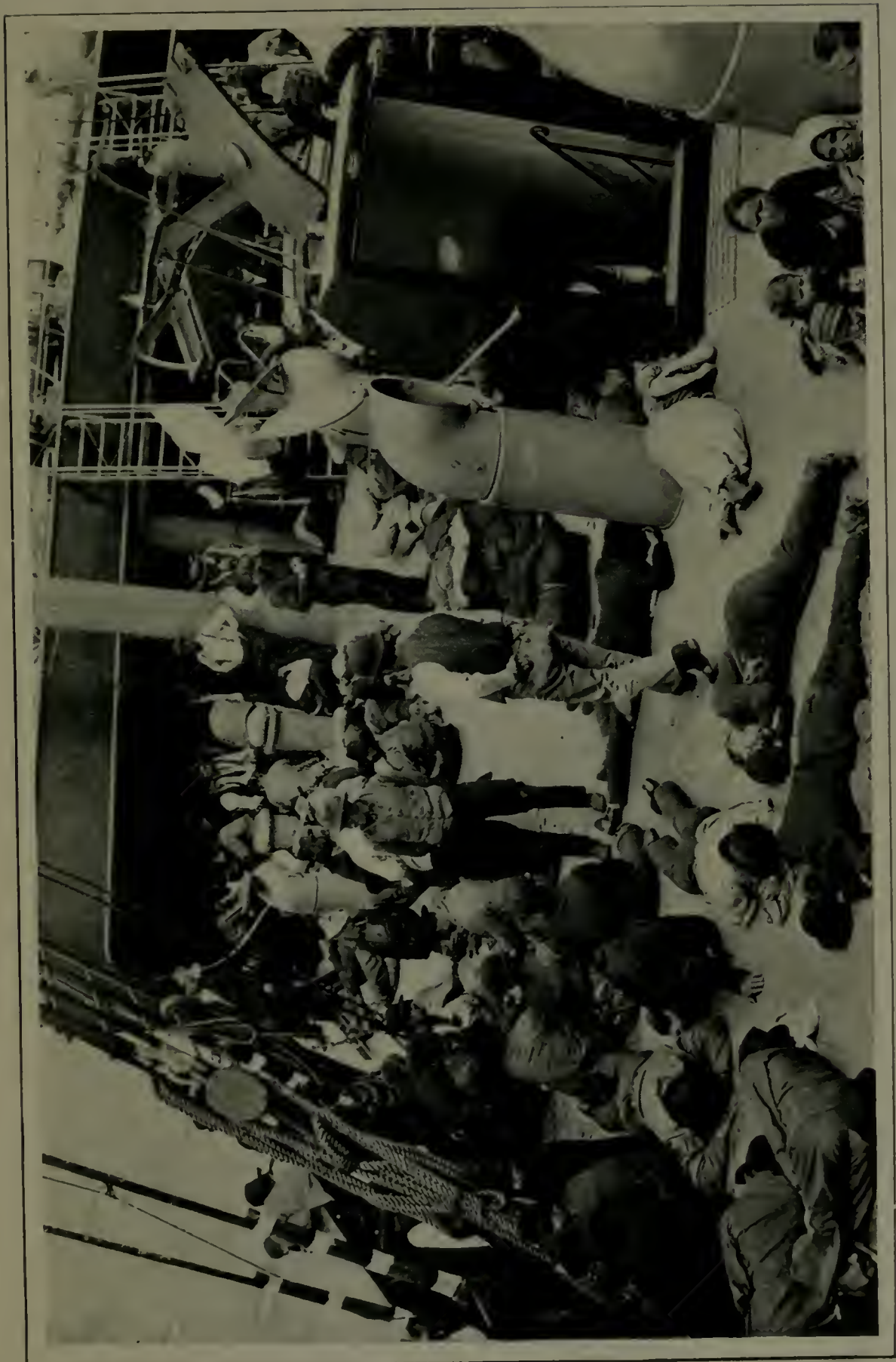
That was the end of his story. He breathed
like a tired man, for the effort of speaking
English was great, and being unemotional,

the words were hard and heavy ; while the pain, whatever pain he felt, was unexpressed and therefore hurt the more.

Her story was longer ; not because she was Irish and a woman, but because hers was the longer story, and the sadder. Not only has a man fewer difficulties to overcome in breaking social and racial barriers, but this man had gone up, and she had gone down, much further down than she knew, when she married him.

I first saw her sitting alone, or as much alone as one could be on that overcrowded deck, where a sheltered place was at a premium ; for the first symptoms of seasickness had manifested themselves. The passengers were reeling at all angles in all sorts of strange groupings. Jews, Roumanians, Poles, Russians, Slovaks, Croatians, a heterogeneous mass, never before so close together as in this levelling, all-embracing, mysterious disease.

Yesterday, the sun was shining ; the sea was low and spirits were high. Accordions and mouth-organs kept alive national differ-



“NEVER BEFORE SO CLOSE TOGETHER AS IN THIS LEVELLING, ALL-EMBRACING, MYSTERIOUS
DISEASE”

ences by their strange music; a bagpipe was heard in one corner and a *gusla* in another; German girls were waltzing, Polish girls danced a polka; Croatian men joined hands in the Kola while the Jews, with whom it was a holy day, prayed loudly and unctuously, apart from the Gentiles.

To-day—all were one in their approaching misery—all except this woman who looked through the mist at the veiled sun beginning his westward journey towards their common goal.

* * * * *

It is not so easy as once it was to begin conversation with a woman in the steerage. Women are warned against men, and every approach is met by suspicion.

“Not a very nice day, is it?”

“No,” she answered briefly.

“Where are you going?”

“Where everybody else is going,” she replied.

“To New York?” There was no answer.

“You are Irish,” I said, looking at her

beautiful red hair, caught by the wind and tossed in picturesque disorder above the veil which covered it.

“You bet I am Irish!” She said it in a grim sort of way, a savage joy rising in her gray eyes.

“You are not from New York, you are from the West.”

“You bet I am from the West!” Then her face grew sunny for a moment. “Yes, I am from the West. How did you know?”

“Well, I am a guesser. Let me make another guess or two. You are from Pennsylvania, not far from Pittsburg; your first name is Bridget; your last name isn’t Irish, and I can pronounce it better than you can.” The first attack was successfully carried out. When I pronounced her name as it ought to be spoken and more musically than she had ever heard it, she capitulated.

“How do you manage it? Show me—I am from Missouri.” So I gave her a lesson in pronouncing Polish.

I have always found language lessons the best means of beginning interviews on board

of ship and elsewhere. I told her that I had met her husband. She tried hard to apologize for him but when she discovered my attitude of mind she decided to tell me her side of the story.

“The old man brought him home from church—to keep him from drinking, he said. He has been daffy on saving men from drink ever since he joined the St. Matthew’s society. The boy stayed. I tell you he was a sticker. Talk about glue! You couldn’t get rid of him except by pushing him out of the house, and then he’d hang around like a dog until long past midnight.

“Say, those Polanders are stayers! They don’t talk much—but they hang on like beggar’s-lice. He didn’t seem to understand when I tried to get rid of him, and he always understood too much when I was nice to him, which wasn’t often.

“When he asked me to marry him I was mad, stark mad—regular bughouse—I told him to go to the devil—and he went to the old man and asked him to let me marry him. The old man told him to go to the hot place,

and he came to me and he said the old man said all right.

“The old man and me tossed him back and forth to wear him out and make him quit; but he seemed to enjoy the game. He stayed in it to the end and won out. That’s the way with men from the beginning to the end of the chapter. He was a nice fellow, better than the usual run of Polacks, and I understood that his people were well off. Anyway we were married.

“No, I never regretted it. I am game, you know. Marriage is a lottery and I drew a Polander. I shan’t go back on him. No Reno in mine. I am a Catholic, and I took him for better or for worse, and I guess it’s for both, whatever man you get.

“When he told me his mother had died, and his father wanted him to come home, I was glad to go. I always wanted to go to Europe and now my chance had come.

“It was lots of fun on the ship. The sea was good to us and we travelled second cabin like regular swells. He didn’t want to go

that way, but I learned him how to eat proper and we got along fine.

“Didn’t I open my eyes though when we saw the old sod across the pond? I know now why they love the green. There isn’t such a green anywhere in the world.

“It was all awfully fine—all of it—till we came to Poland. We went eighteen miles in a wagon over a road so dusty that we both looked like the men do in the cement mill. I tell you I saw everything, although my eyes smarted—the funny men and women and their queer clothes. They looked at me and lifted their hats and made low bows. Of course I couldn’t say a word to them and I have a backbone as stiff as a poker.

“The village where Joe was born is the bummiest thing you ever saw. Just one street and not a blade of grass or a tree in it. Joe had tried to tell me that it wasn’t extra fine, but say, that town is the limit on everything out; dust, dirt and fleas. Fleas! say, I never knew what they were. I don’t think I ever saw one before in my life. I thought at first that a pin of mine had gone astray;

then I began to think little bits of hot coal had fallen down my back. Then Joe told me it was fleas. Well, I tell you, they travelled some. They are a regular 'now you have them and now you don't' kind of bug—but the feeling is always there.

"Eating! say, they eat bread so hard that every time you eat a bite you think you're laying the corner-stone of a church. Cabbage enough to make you think you're a regular sauerkraut barrel.

"No, I couldn't eat anything, or drink anything for a long time. The water smelled of sewerage. I don't know how those people live. Joe, he tried to learn them something, but they laughed at him and at me.

"Joe had told me that when I saw his old man I must kiss his hand and that I must wait till he sat down before I did; so I thought I'd see a regular swell. He was standing in front of his house when we arrived and his head reached above the door; not that he was particularly tall but the door was so low. He wore a sheepskin coat which

you could smell a mile off, he was barefooted and his feet were regular dirty. Well, I couldn't have kissed his hand, not before I had manicured it first, or given it a regular Monday boilin' washing.

"We didn't gee from the first. We were all to sleep in one room ; the windows were shut tight and when I tried to open one at night there was a regular row about it. I don't know what the old man said but he just jawed Joe all the time and he told me to take off my shoes and stockings and corsets and go out in the field and work. I told him I'd see him in Jersey first.

"We had a regular cat and dog time of it for a while, then things grew a mite better. I guess he began to understand me and I began to understand him. Then the old man began calling me *Dobra* Bridget, but soon after that I had to pack up and leave.

"Nop, it wasn't because the old man scolded ; I got used to that, but ——" there she hesitated and looked at the Sun dipping into the ocean, as if thirsty after the day's journey across the worlds.

“That’s the way I began to feel for America—just that way,” and she pointed to the great disk, fast disappearing over the western edge of the sea.

“Homesick—I tell you, homesick is no name for it ; and then we are expecting a boy and he must be born in the U. S. A. If I live I’ll learn him how to love that country. Say, there is only one country to be born in and only one country to die in. It’s finer even than Ireland—finer than any country in the world, you bet !”

She rose to go down, and as I helped her across the crowded deck to the steep steps of the steerage, an old man standing in the entrance pushed me aside, and led her carefully down. He looked at me as if I were an intruder, and I heard him say to his daughter-in-law, more gently than I ever heard any Polish peasant speak to a woman : “*Dobra* Bridget, all right.”

VIII

Hot, Through Many Generations

ALL the man had to do was to push the immigrants in the direction in which they were to go. Occasionally he talked Manhattan Island English; but none of those for whom he lifted the gate and pointed the way understood what he said. He merely directed the stream at Ellis Island after the inspectors had done their work.

A thrust between the shoulder-blades, down a dark, forbidding staircase, meant that the way into the city of New York was clear. Sometimes, I am sure, this thrust between the shoulders was an impatient one; for even the human automaton knew that the island had its full measure of people, "pressed down, shaken together and running over."

A vigorous push on the left shoulder directed the strangers towards the hopeful

west, and none needed to complain that the direction was given ungently.

Those who were sent to the right, into a safe enclosure, the man pitied ; for that little six by ten room was a *cul de sac*. There was just space enough in it for the thousands to turn around and again face the eastern instead of the western Sun.

He was human after all, this automaton, and when he directed a group of dark-skinned people towards that port of lost hope, I heard him say : "That's a great bunch of Dagos. What the deuce can be the matter with them?" That the phrase was peppered by oaths made no difference ; the man had plenty of feeling, but a limited vocabulary.

Indeed it was a "great bunch of Dagos," only they were not Dagos. They looked to me Oriental : Syrians, Armenians perhaps ; but I heard the patriarch of the group say : "*Fürchtet euch nicht, meine Kinder. Wir sind in Gottes Händen.*"

Then I knew that they were Germans, by speech at least, and I perceived by the se-

renity of their faces, and the way in which they bore themselves through the trying ordeal which followed, that they were the children of God.

“If they are Dutch,” the automaton said, “it must have been d——d hot where they were living.”

Indeed it was very hot, where they were living; for the ship’s manifest showed that they came from Constanca, Roumania. How they came to live by the Black Sea and now were going to North Dakota, and why the children showed unmistakably the infusion of Oriental blood, the patriarch told me, while seated on a piece of baggage in the waiting-room at Ellis Island. Around him were wife, and child, and grandchildren, wearied and half starved after weeks of journeying; yet all of them serene and happy, as behooved the children of God.

“My forefathers,” the patriarch said—I wish I were able to record his rich, unspoiled, melodious, sixteenth-century German—“lived in or near Salzburg at the time when God sent the great Dr. Martin Luther to preach

the Gospel of Grace, and to give to men the uncorrupted word of God in their mother tongue. They must have been rich in this world's goods for they owned a Bible. "Mother," he said, "show it to the brother."

The wife drew from the bottom of a soiled bag a book, one of those volumes which thrills you by the character of its binding, its mighty clasps and its rich ornamentation. A holy book indeed!

For its possession and for faith in its teaching his ancestors, nearly two hundred years ago, left the valley of the Salza, left home—a peasant home with rich traditions,—left a country they loved, and went to the plains of Southern Russia. There, on the shores of the Volga, the patriarch was born, there he married a German maiden from a neighbouring colony, whose forefathers, too, had left their homes, for freedom to worship God.

They reared their children in the faith of their fathers, and lived in peace until about a quarter of a century ago, when the Russian government withdrew the privileges granted

these Christian colonists and began drafting their sons into the army.

To kill a human being, whether in a quarrel between individuals or nations, was to them disobedience to the Word of God, for the possession of which their forefathers had suffered ; and they defied the Czar to obey God. The patriarch and his sons were thrown into prison, and liberated only on their promise to emigrate. Centuries after their forefathers left their home in Germany, they had to leave their Russian home and for much the same cause.

In simple language, in a calm voice, he told me of their leaving the little village, the church and the churchyard ; of leaving behind them the fields he and his ancestors had torn from the surrounding swamps of the Volga, carrying with them nothing but the Holy Book, now lying heavily upon my knees, and opening almost automatically to its most worn page, in the Gospel of Luke. "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The lower edge of the page was worn off, and

the whole margin discoloured ; evidently it had been the comfort page of many generations.

I closed the book and was about to hand it back to the mother ; but she said with true feminine pride, " Look at the pages in front and in the back and you will know about our ancestors." The old man chided her for her worldly pride, but I opened the book as directed. In crude but distinct lettering was written the name of the first owner, Johannes Krieger, January 3, 1636.

"Johannes Krieger, his lawfully wedded wife Eva, their children Hansl, Thomas and Grete were driven from their home by the imperial decree in the reign of Ferdinand the second, and found a new habitation in the colony Bethania, Russia."

Records of births and deaths follow until the year 1886. Then another Johannes Krieger wrote :

"Johannes Krieger and his wife Martha, born Woolf, driven from their home Bethania with four children, one daughter and three sons, born to them in holy wedlock. Jo-

hannes aged twenty-four, Andreas nineteen, and Bartholomeus eighteen, died on the way to their new home after being severely beaten by Kossacks. They died testifying to their faith in God's Holy Word."

The last record was made in Asia Minor, and was written in Armenian. The mother explained that after leaving Russia they went to Asia Minor, and there the daughter married an Armenian, the father of the dark-eyed children.

I gave the Bible back to the grandmother, who was the guardian of this treasure, and I took the grandchildren on my knees. As I looked into their large dark eyes, and patted their flaxen locks, their mother told me of the persecutions she and her husband suffered from the Turks; how she was widowed and her children orphaned, how finally they found a home on the shores of the Black Sea, tilling the soil of their landlords, the pleasure loving Roumanians.

"The Lord's ways are inscrutable," the old man said, after the daughter had finished. "Man is born for suffering, and his days are

full of trouble; but the Apostle has said that 'the sufferings of this present time cannot be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.'

"Why did we leave Roumania? Human government is full of errors and it is not for me to find fault. A decree went forth from Bucharest that the land must not be leased to strangers; and so we had to leave, after disposing of our earthly goods.

"The agent who sold us the tickets sent us on the Danube to Vienna. Eight days we travelled up-stream, unsheltered, on the deck of a steamer, suffering from rain and cold. When we came to the great city of Vienna we were besieged by many people who wanted to lead us hither and thither; but we committed ourselves to the guidance of God.

"Three days we were on the train which brought us to Hamburg, and we had to wait nine days before they led us onto a big ship. Ten days we were on the great ocean among many people, and through storm and fog God has led us.

“Two hundred years ago some of my ancestors who suffered in the great persecution came to this America. What has become of their descendants I know not. The tradition in our family was that they went to a colony called Pennsylvania. We also heard that they were prospered by God in earthly things and found full freedom for their faith.”

The old man shook his head. “Yes,” he said, “your country must have changed ; for when we reached the harbour and saw the statue of Liberty, a man who wore the symbol of your country on his cap, came on the ship to examine us. He took me by the arm, sore from vaccination, and dragged me before another man who also examined me, and because I did not remove my hat quickly enough, he knocked it off of my head. My wife and daughter and the grandchildren were driven as if they were cattle, not human beings.

“It is true there were many of us,” he said apologetically ; “the day was hot, and our steps slow and heavy for we were wearied from our journey. We lay a day and a

night in the great harbour; we saw the huge buildings of the city, the many lights and heard the noises. We could not sleep; we prayed that God might lead us safely to our new home in North Dakota.

"You know the rest, how they detained us, how they questioned me about my earthly possessions, and how they shook their heads because I had but little gold; for I paid many thousands of francs to get the tickets, and the journey was long and the bread dear.

"They asked me if I did not want to appeal to the government in Washington, and I told them how for over two hundred years my forefathers suffered from unjust rulers and governments, and that the only righteous government was in Heaven, and to that I have appealed."

* * * * *

The court at Ellis Island, although full of error, because it is fallible, opened the gate of the port of lost hope, and the human automaton pushed Johannes Krieger and his

descendants gently on the left shoulder towards the hopeful west.

As they disappeared he said to me: "You say they are Germans? It must have been very hot where they were living."

"Yes," I replied, "it was very hot through many generations."

IX

The Fellowship of Suffering

A WALK from one end of Manhattan Island to the other is equivalent to a round the world tour, minus the bother of customs officials. One misses also the sight of strange architecture, the ever fascinating soldiers, the odd vehicles, and all those other external things which divide races and nationalities, and make travelling such an attractive pastime.

The people themselves, especially that class of them which escapes one in following the beaten path, are on Manhattan Island ; in such numbers indeed, that the few Americans who travel on the motor 'bus up and down Fifth Avenue, and those who spend part of their nomadic existence on that highway, seem like strangers in this their own city.

Nevertheless, it is this strong, native race which seems to dominate the others. These

bits of Syria, Armenia, China, Russia, Italy, Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, France and Germany through which I often pass, have hovering over them vital influences, which threaten speedily to mold and shape their inhabitants into Americans.

Only where one leaves the avenues and street corners, with their news stands of Americanized Yiddish or Italian newspapers, the thoroughly American soda water fountain and the still more native saloon, and ascends the dark stairs of some tenement house, or comes into a locality where hundreds of people from the same village or town breathe the same polluted back-yard air—only then does one realize how vitally this bit of the New World is connected with the Old. Only then does one realize how closely traditions, race habits, and local customs cling, and how small is the world of these peoples who live in this large city, upon our great new continent.

A few years ago in the parlour of a tiny flat in a certain house on Avenue B, New York, there was, in spirit, a town of four

thousand inhabitants in Northern Hungary. At least it was to this parlour that its virile, expatriated youths came for news, and brought their own tidings of success and failure. There, courtships were encouraged, and matches made, and there every Sunday afternoon, the old home town with all its inhabitants was passed in review. There, as everywhere, only bad news was really news ; conversation usually began in this way :

“What is the news from home ? ”

“What shall the news be ? ” an awkward, red-haired youth answered, with a shrug of the shoulders. “My cousin what keeps the notion store is bankrupt. He has made nothing out of it, and he will be lucky if he escapes imprisonment. Then he will come to America with a wife and four little children, and I’ll have to help him find a job.

“Aaron Schindler what is in the army suicided himself. The good for nothing ! Got into debt, and shot himself ; such a fool ! ”

There is a loud outcry ; a girl grows pale and staggers towards the speaker. There are anger and grief in her voice as she asks :

“Who told you? How do you know? Why didn’t they write me?” Then the merciful tears come, and she buries her head on the bosom of a sympathizing friend as she sobs: “Poor mother! poor mother!”

“I didn’t know you was here,” the red-haired youth says contritely; although inwardly he is proud of the fact that he “scooped” even the sister of the deceased on this dainty morsel of terrible news.

“*Nu ja!*” philosophized the host; “that’s the way we have to go. Some by fire und some by water!—as the rabbi says. He had to go by fire—that’s the way it goes. All of Szukonovcze is dying. In my last letter I heard of eight deaths.” For a moment there is silence; then he reads the roll of the dead.

“Joseph Schlome died of cramps—I always knew he was going that way. He would eat a peck of black radishes at a time. I knew he would eat them once for the last time.

“Miriam Bloch, Schmul Bloch’s second wife, was buried just before *Yom Kipper*. Schmul will kill another before long. You’ll see. He’ll take Rachel—she has consump-

tion, too. She was crazy to marry him before he married her sister. *Nu ja !* ”

Each name awakened memories of bygone days ; of the street where this one or that one lived, neighbour to the dead. Squabbles on the market days were recalled ; the synagogue, the cemetery, the mourners, all were visualized. Thus they fed their homesick hearts on bitter food—sweet, after all ; because it revived memories of home.

When all the living and the dead had been judged, we reached the second part of the informal program ; news of the day, principally shop news. Of the red-headed Irish forelady : “ May she get the apoplexy ! ”

If wishes were microbes, then all the Irish foreladies in the New York shops would die of some terrible disease. This particular forelady, “ Brings me a skoit und she says : Mr. Hoish, you’ll get fired if you don’t do no better.” This in East Side English, badly disfigured and shot through by Yiddish.

Next in order came the “ boss,” the cutters, the buyers, the wages ; then those terrible competitors, the Russian Jews.

“They live on a dill pickle and a piece of *schwartz brot*; who can compete with them?”

“They are one of Pharaoh’s plagues. They *verderb* the whole America.”

Two young men, one of them working in buttons and the other in straw, had a wider range of thought; for one had reached to the lower levels of ten cent vaudeville, and the other had some notions of baseball. No one listened to what they had to say of the “goil what can sing to sixteen coloured picshures, and sings so loud she can be heard above the roar of the elevated;” nor of the pitchers and bases and all that other Hellenic terminology detested and feared by their ancestors of long ago.

The memory of a week’s dull, hard labour past, and the anticipation of a dull, hard week ahead; the story of the tyrants that oppressed them, and the record of their struggle towards a bank account—these and the catalogue of death and disease, from home, were news. Not baseball scores and vaudeville criticism. But the chief piece of bad news had been

withheld. The host, real epicure that he was, had left the best to the last.

“A nice piece of news I’ve got to tell you!” he says slowly and with proper emphasis.

What piece of news could still be of importance?

“Has a fire wiped out Szukonovcze?”

“Has the cholera swept away all their relatives?”

“Has the river overflowed and drowned them all?”

“No, worse than that! Irma Cohn, what works on the telephone already, is engaged to a Christian!”

The thunder has rolled, the lightning has struck. Stunned, they sit for a while speechless. Then the host, conscious of the fact that he has given his *pièce de résistance* to his guests, and properly flattered by their reception of his news, continues: “*Nu, ja!* When her old mother hears that, it will break her heart.

“Think of bringing up a child like she was brought up, in a *kosher* home und such a home! On Friday you could smell the

house a block away, so clean it was. The milk und the meat dishes was locked up in separate closets ; her mother was afraid they get *trepsha* if they looked at each other."

Thus far, the host's daughter, a young woman of nineteen, who grew into womanhood in New York, had taken no part in the conversation. She had become somewhat calloused to this weekly Jeremiad from home. The little town had quite faded from her memory, and the news which so excited the others did not arouse her interest.

She was reading the *Morning "Tschurnal"* and her heart was keyed to other thrills. The whole world had bared its secrets to her : millionaires and heiresses of all sorts had revealed to her their love affairs ; she knew of divorces in high life, and of the coming marriage of a certain foreign nobleman to American millions.

She had read in that morning's "*Tschurnal*" of eight hundred miners entombed and of eight thousand people killed by an earthquake ; so why should eight people's dying in Szukonovcze affect her ?

She was so Americanized that she had even written a letter to "Miss Montagu" who gives advice to young lovers—but that was her secret. She was startled into speaking when they mentioned Irma Cohn, and regretted it the moment she had finished her sentence.

"If Irma Cohn truly loves a Christian why should she not marry him?"

"What do you say?" her father cried hoarsely, his eyes glaring and his right hand beating the table as if it were a cloak he were pressing with his hot iron. "Loves a Christian! Marry! *Nu ja!* Children should one have! America land of our exile—land of our ruin! Our children talk about loving Christians und marrying them!"

Excitedly he moved towards his daughter who had uttered the seditious thought, and shook her fiercely. "*Nu ja* :—now you got it! If Irma Cohn wants to marry a Christian und break her mother's heart—if she wants to disgrace the name of her parents I can't help it; but if you ever think of doing such a thing, I swear by the memory of my sainted

mother that I'll not live under the same roof with you for a day ! Out you go, or out I'll go ! ”

Too much hurt to reply, the daughter ran to the small dark room which was hers and I heard her sobbing ; while in the parlour they rehearsed all the great misfortunes which had come to them and their relatives, by way of intermarriage between Jews and Christians.

Thinking it over they found in each family a black sheep of that kind, and some were even blacker, for they had been baptized. They were spoken of in a whisper and the older ones spat on the ground after the names had passed their lips.

“ *Nu ja !* ” the host finally said ; “ we got a case of that kind in our family. Her brother,” and he pointed with his thumb towards the kitchen where his wife was making coffee for the guests—“ such a good for nothing—a libertine, a gambler ; he breaks the heart of his mother by getting baptized.

“ I wonder what those soul-catchers wanted of him ; he was rotten to the bone.” At this moment his wife brought the coffee, and

the air of the Old World village was made more real; for thus the coffee smelled in Szukonovcze, and thus the coffee cake tasted. The guests almost wept from joy as they audibly sipped the beverage and with loud smackings ate the coffee cake.

Of course the hostess apologized for both; they were not up to the mark. The yeast and the coffee were not as good as in the Old Country. The oven was too hot or too cold; but the appetites of the company, as well as their sincere protestations, proved that she had done her very best. When, after much refilling of cups and repassing of cake, she finally sat down to drink her coffee, she turned to her husband and said:

"You were talking about my brother Alfred, weren't you? You better not talk about him if you want to bring him up as a horrible example of what these baptizers do for us Jews.

"What you said about him is all true. He was a light-hearted, irresponsible boy; he gambled, he ran after the women, he was imprisoned, he was a tramp;—but the one

year he lived, after those Christians got hold of him, he lived like a man, and he died like a saint.

“Just after he was baptized he wrote mother a letter from Hamburg—such a letter ! It was like a sermon. He begged forgiveness for the wrong he had done her and all of us, and he said he hoped to live to right some of the wrong. It’s a letter that ought to be framed and hung up ——”

Her husband interrupted : “He ought to have been hung too. Rascal ! I wonder what he got for letting himself be baptized.”

A family jar seeming imminent, the guests hastily excused themselves and went home—scattering throughout the big city, to begin again on the morrow their week of labour.

* * * * *

Recently I visited the home on Avenue B, where I had been a guest on that interesting Sunday afternoon. It is no more the gathering place of immigrants from the town of Szukonovcze. Prosperity has come to many of them and they have no bad news to bring ; they have been more or less weaned

from that bit of the Old World where they were born, and only occasionally some of them visit their former host, who still has news, bad news to tell.

Bad news indeed, at the time of my recent visit. That afternoon there was to be a funeral—the funeral of his own daughter, and it was to be a Christian burial. He was not going, for she had betrayed him and his race. That Sunday when last I was in his house she was “keeping company” with a Christian, a young bookkeeper in the shop where she worked.

The father drove her from his home when he discovered it, and the man married her at once.

“*Nu ja!*” the father said, “they say he made her a good husband. He oined thoity dollars a week regular; he wasn’t no loafer und he stayed at home nights.

“What did I care? He is a *Goy* (Christian) und she broke my heart. *Nu ja!* Now she is dead, und my wife is carrying on. Let her! What do I care? It is her fault; she did not stick by me. She went to see

her every Sunday afternoon. I left home ; I wouldn't live with a wife who polluted my house by going to her *Govish* daughter—now she is dead ! ”

After long parleying he said : “ If I go to the funeral I go only to show them that a Jew got a heart. *Nu ja !* I will go.”

Together we three climbed the steep steps of the elevated, his wife weeping all the way, and his lips nervously twitching from anger or pain or both.

Somewhere in those monotonous stretches of New York's tenements, above 100th Street, we descended into Third Avenue and to the daughter's home. The house was marked by a cluster of white roses fastened to the door, before which stood a line of carriages, the hearse, and the usual gaping crowd.

“ Flowers ! ” the father muttered, as we entered the hallway. “ These *Goyim* must think this is a wedding !

“ Look, look ! ” he cried as we reached the already crowded room where his daughter lay. “ Look ! ” His fingers trembled as he pulled my coat. I looked and saw the

Bodenhaus Madonna. Her sad eyes seemed to be resting upon the casket.

"*Nu ja!*" the old man whispered. "She sold herself good!—She lived like a queen! Look at the foiniture und the coitains und the piano! But what has she got from it now? She is dead! *Nu ja!* That's the minister—hm—a boy! No beard has he got.

"That's him, her man. May he get the apoplexy! He stole my goil!"

"Look this way," I said; "there is her baby." But he would not look at it. While I spoke, there came floating from an adjoining room the hymn "Rock of Ages." When the last sad note had ceased vibrating, there was silence again and then firmly and triumphantly the minister read: "I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord." "Though he were dead yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die;" and so to the end of that wonderful burial service which gathers into itself all the victory of the Christian faith.

When the minister finished, the father's pent-up Jewish emotion broke forth, and he

lifted up his voice, wailing and weeping, like those who have no hope. His wife's lamentations blended with his, while the Christians sang: "Nearer my God to Thee."

"My daughter, my daughter!" the father lamented as he bent over the casket. "My daughter whom the Christians have taken from me! Your parents weep for you, no one else does. You are our own flesh and blood—our own—you were stolen from our hearts. *Oy, oy, oy!* They sing and have flowers like at a wedding, but ours is the grief! Oh! daughter, our lost daughter!"

The unhappy parents were finally torn away and led to the waiting carriage. All the way to the cemetery the old man groaned about his daughter who had no one to weep and lament over her.

"Think of it! her husband, that hard-hearted *Goy*, didn't even get his handkerchief wet during the whole service, and the preacher's voice was not raised to any pitch at all. As for the singers! All through those hymns not once did they break down! Cold, cruel hearts!"

So he complained of the terrible fate of his daughter, to be buried thus, unwept by him for whom she had given up home and faith.

Again, when the casket was lowered into the ground, the parents wept so loudly, that visitors in different parts of the cemetery stopped their sad ministrations at the graves of their beloved, and listened to the weird lamentations.

Upon the old people's tears the Christians scattered flowers, and above their wailings rose the strong, vibrant note of faith: "I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me Write, From henceforth blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, even so saith the Lord, for they rest from their labours. . . ."

The minister and the friends had driven away and I was leading the weeping parents to our carriage, when looking back we saw the husband prostrate upon the new made grave. Grief had its way, and as his uncontrolled sobs reached our ears, the Jewish parents turned back to comfort the Christian husband.

X

When the Sun Stands Still

“**S**T. JOHN’S day is so great that the Sun stands still three times to pay reverence to it,” little Velislav said to his older sister Yanya who, being a girl, was in need of instruction.

“He will just keep going, going, as he always went,” the sceptical sister replied ; “there by the Trusina he will come up, and there by the Bresina he will go down.”

“Yes, there he goes up and there he goes down ; that’s all you know about it. You’re only a girl—you just wait till to-morrow. At four o’clock the Sun will stand still and again at noon and then in the evening, when the cows come home.”

“Oh, yes ! the Sun will stand still when the cows come home,” mocked the sister. “You don’t know that the Sun can’t stop.”

“Can’t stop ! Who told you it can’t stop ?” the irate little brother shouted.

"Teacher told me it can't stand still because it doesn't move."

The boy stopped picking flowers for St. John's day, dismay and wrath written on his face. So it wasn't true what the *baba* had told him, and what he heard the stable boys saying while they were tying birch bark for torches, to be burned on the hilltops. And if it wasn't true why all this fuss?

Why should he gather flowers for wreaths? Why should the stable boys walk with lighted torches around the pigsties and the stable, and why should they climb to the top of the Trusina and plant their torches as a signal that the Sun was standing still, to do reverence to St. John's day?

And why should his father, the village priest, go out at noon with the church banners and the choirs, but that at noon the Sun might stand still? And then in the evening on the Bresina! Well, if it wasn't true, what was the use?

One by one the flowers dropped from his little fist, until but two blossoms remained hanging loosely between thumb and index

finger. Then he grasped them more firmly, as he said to himself, "She is only a girl. She doesn't know. Even if the teacher did say the Sun doesn't move, I'll watch it to-morrow and I'll see it will stop."

So with renewed energy he picked the blue corn-flowers and the red poppies, and then carried them to the village church, where the women and the children were tying wreaths, decorating altars and pillars, and winding young grain around the bell-ropes.

St. John's day came to the little Servian village, and while the children entered joyfully into its celebration the older ones looked anxiously to the mountain; not for the Sun to stand still, but for clouds. For three months no rain had fallen. The last year's harvest had failed because of drought, bread was scarce and dear, taxes were high, and the king's arm strong to collect.

That noon after the priest had solemnly prayed for rain, the village girls took Miliza, the prettiest one among them, and twined around her the flowers and grasses they had gathered, so that she looked like a

huge bouquet, in which her face was scarcely visible.

So they went from house to house and at each door water was poured over her, whom they called Dodola, the name of a rain goddess, surviving in the memories of the old people and blending with their present day religious consciousness.

While the young people danced around Dodola they sang :

“ Unto God the highest,
Maidens now are praying :
Oj Dodo, oj Dodola !
Showers on us pour !
Oj Dodo, oj Dodola !

“ Water Thou our fields and meadows,
Oj Dodo, oj Dodola!
Moisten Thou our wheat and barley
And the double leaf of maize,
Oj Dodo, oj Dodola ! ”

But the rain did not descend ; poor Dodola took a severe cold and was carried away by quick consumption, and gloom settled over the villagers as they faced poverty and starvation.

Little Velislav and his sister Yanya were listening at their father's study door. The elders of the village were conferring with him about the future, and the children were much interested.

"Do you know where that country is that they are talking about?" asked Velislav of his sister.

"Right under our feet on the other side of the earth. Sh! Listen!"

"I can't hear anything but A-merica, A-merica," he whispered.

"That's the name of the country, and it's right under our feet. You have to travel over the Trusina and then to the ocean and then, oh! so far! You see, that's the way we know that the Sun does not stand still three times on St. John's day; because right here under us is A-merica."

Then they ran as fast as their little legs could carry them, for the floor in their father's study shook under the feet of those strong men who had sought his counsel and now came, out with a determined look on their faces; for they were going to A-merica.

Ten men were going; the heads of as many households. They were going to spy out the land and send word if they found what they sought, or come back if they were disappointed.

On Sunday after mass the village priest blessed them and prayed for their safety and happiness. Tears were in his eyes; but the men, all of whom had been in the army, looked solemn and grim. They would not cry. That was for the priest, the women and the children.

In the afternoon they went from home to home to say good-bye. Everywhere their health was drunk, and when night came the whiskey had taken the pride out of them, and they were weeping, deploring the fate which sent them over the sea. No one could sleep that night because of the loud lamentations which were made. The priest went with the men to Fiume and promised that he would pray for them and look after the welfare of their families.

Many months passed and then a letter came to the parsonage. There was money

in it and a call for men. Ten more went and ten times ten ; although the Dodola had no need to cry for rain and the fields yielded abundant harvests. At last there were not enough men left to light the fires on the eve of St. John's day, on the hills which stretched between the Trusina and the Bresina.

After two years, some of those who had gone out first, returned and told wonderful stories of A-merica. But it wasn't the stories of high buildings and swift railroads which impressed the priest ; it was the way the men told them. They never spoke of God except to swear ; they did not cross themselves when the name of the Deity fell upon their ears, and when they passed the *icons* on the way to church, they held their heads erect.

Seemingly there was no God, no Christ in A-merica. The good priest questioned them, and they told him how they lived without God and without the sacraments. When he blamed them they asked : "Do you want us to go to the Papists who have images in their churches, or to the Protestants who have nothing in them except an organ and

who have no mass and no priest and no sacraments?"

* * * * *

Again Velislav and Yanya are listening at the study door and they hear their father saying that he will, he must go to that heathen A-merica, and look after his countrymen. He will go for a year. The curate shall take charge of the parish, and the children he will leave in care of the trusted servant.

So their father was going to look after the sheep of his flock on the other side of the earth. Velislav no longer believed that the Sun stood still three times on St. John's day; but if the earth revolved, why not get on top of the Bresina and then jump down into A-merica? Now he knew, not only that A-merica was on the other side of the earth, but the names of its states and their capitals. He had read also of Indians, wild and ferocious, and he began to cry when he heard of his father's determination to leave for A-merica.

Yanya, being a girl, cried too, and thus



"HE MUST GO TO THAT HEATHEN A-MERICA, AND LOOK AFTER
HIS COUNTRYMEN"

they were discovered when the men came out of the study ; for the floor did not shake as it used to when the peasants walked over it. These men who had been in America wore light shoes, there was no iron on the heel, and they walked less clumsily than they did before they went there.

Yanya dried her eyes on her apron and Velislav dried his on his shirt-sleeve. Their father took them in his arms and cried too, and his tears ran unchecked down his long black beard.

As much of their story as I have written Yanya and Velislav told me after I had told them about the America I know and love. They showed me three letters written by their father and as they are most interesting, they shall complete my story.

“ *W——, Pennsylvania, Oct. 17, 1910.*

“ MY DEAR CHILDREN :

“ I reached here by the guidance of God, the sixteenth day after I left home, having committed you to the care of the saints and of the good and trusted Miluska. At Fiume there were many Pravo Slavs from Old Serbia, Montenegro and Dalmatia and

they paid proper respect to me. At the Immigrant's Station I was permitted to read the service and celebrate mass.

"Before we went on the ship they looked into my throat and into my eyes, four different times; they did that to every man, woman and child, and those who had sore eyes or sore throats, or who had no teeth because of age or disease, were sent back. Poor people or perhaps lucky people; for I found that this America is not the land of God or of gold—but of that later.

"The ship looked very big and very fine; but as there were three thousand souls on her it did not smell very good and it was not clean very long.

"When we had sailed out of the Quarnero, a very hot Sirroco blew, and the ship began to rock as if it were an empty poppy seed cup. Everybody was violently sick, including your father. While the sickness lasted the men and the women prayed, because they thought the ship was going down; but when we came into middle ocean (the Mediterranean) the sea was calm and our spirits revived. The men began to drink and sing, they danced with the women, and forgot all about the danger and the sickness.

"I saw beautiful but unhappy Italy where so many people were killed by the earthquake. We did not land there, for fear of the cholera.

"We also saw the shore of Spain and our ship stopped and took on many, many

barrels of grapes to carry to America. Then we saw the Rock of Gibraltar, and then nothing but sea and sky for fourteen days. Thanks to the protection of God we had no more storm.

“When the sailors told us that we would land the next morning, everybody grew very much excited, not only about packing up their things but also about being let into this country. The ruler of America is very careful not to let anybody in who has not a sound body, clean eyes, big lungs, and strong arms. They care nothing about a man’s soul.

“I saw no cross or *icon*, not even an image in the place where we all had to go before we landed; neither did I see any soldiers, and the men who were the officers carried no arms.

“Fortunately Abradovic and Mushicsky (whom I suppose you do not remember, for they were among the first to come to America) met me at Ellis Island and with them I went to the great city of New York.

“My poor pen cannot describe what I saw so I am sending you a book with pictures, and you can see what my own eyes have seen; that you need not take a mortal’s word for it.

“We travelled from night till next morning to W——. We crossed rivers and went through beautiful cities and over and through the mountains. My poor head is dizzy from what I have seen, and I cannot describe it.

“All I wanted you to know by this letter is that I am safe here by the guidance of God.”

The second letter was written before Christmas and was accompanied by presents. The letter was very long, and I give only extracts from it.

“Our people live here without God. They were glad at first that I came and were ready to build a small chapel; but after a while they did not like me so much because I complained that they did not come to church as often as they should, and that they did not observe the fasts.

* * * * *

“Obradovic, who has more power over the people than I have, told me that in this country the priest is the third wheel on the cart; that I am all right to marry them, baptize their children and give them the communion; but that every man in this country is his own master.

“I did not say anything to him for he is a violent man, especially when he is full of drink, and I cannot blame him for being what he is, and talking as he does. There is no authority here; every man does as he pleases—no one pays any respect to me when I pass and once children ran after me and made fun of my sacred garb.

“My heart aches for these Americans. There are over six hundred Pravo Slavs here; they have come from many countries, but they all live like animals. No one teaches them to do better or anything which is religious.

* * * * *

“A few days ago a young American called on me, the first American who has come to see me. He could speak a few words of Servian and he told me that he wanted to teach our men English, and how to be clean and strong men.

“I looked into his eyes and they were clear and honest looking and I asked him, ‘Do you believe in God and the Christ and the Holy Church?’ and he said, looking straight in my eyes, ‘Yes, I do.’ ‘You do all this for the love of Christ?’ Again he said: ‘Yes.’

“On Sunday I told all the men in the church about this young American and about what he wanted to do for them; but I told them not to listen to any wrong teaching of his, and to report to me. They came to me and reported that the young man was ‘Aw ri’; that they say always when something is very good. I notice much change among those who go to this school, but there are many who do not go and who are getting into evil ways, whom I cannot rescue from their wrong.”

The third letter was written on the 2d of June, 1911. I give it verbatim.

“MY BELOVED CHILDREN:

“In a few months my year will be over, and soon I shall think of coming home to you. I wish I could stay longer because I am learning very much, and my idea of this country is changing very fast. The young American who came to me about the teaching comes very often. He asked me some time ago to take part in celebrating the memory of the soldiers who died in fighting for their country. It is a holy day here. The shops were all closed and all the men of all nationalities were invited.

“Think of it, my dear children! They sent a beautiful automobile after me, and in the machine was the young American. With him was the honourable burgomaster of the city. It was a very, very hot day, but I felt very happy, for there were many flags floating from the buildings, and the children carried tiny flags and flowers. It made me think of our own St. John's day which comes so soon.

“Old soldiers who wore blue suits and soft hats walked at the head of the procession, carrying old battle flags; then came many nationalities: Italians, Hungarians, Greeks, Slovaks, Russians and our own Servians. They were all well dressed and so much alike were they that I could not pick out my own men.

“At the cemetery I was asked to make a speech and I went onto the wooden platform and spoke. Although no one but our Servians understood me, they all listened attentively, and only think, my children, one of our men could translate my speech into English and it was all printed the next day in the newspaper. Inasmuch as I think you and good old Miluska would like to know what I said on this occasion I write it down in this letter :

“ ‘ My friends and brothers, I feel to-day indescribably happy. I am greatly impressed to see how Americans pay homage to their heroic ancestors who have shed their blood and sacrificed their lives for the glory of their fatherland and the welfare of their fellow citizens. These moments shared with you are enough to repay me for all the trouble I had in my coming to this country. They are enough to redeem all the sacrifices made for my dear ones and my fatherland.

“ ‘ The Servian race, of whom I am a proud son, is a heroic race, and it can for that reason appreciate the patriotism of other races. The Servians have for centuries shed their blood and sacrificed their lives for the same sublime idea which brought you here to-day to pay homage to your brave ancestors. All the Servians have not yet been fortunate to obtain their freedom, but God will grant that in the end. We have many heroes and many, very many memorable heroic moments in our history, and I am proud to say that in my

fatherland I was a religious adviser and spiritual father of the Servian army, which, if needs be, to-morrow will die in defense of their country and liberty, just as heroically as your ancestors. I assure you that when they know I have spoken to you to-day and paid homage to your forefathers in their name, their satisfaction and enthusiasm will be great.

“ ‘And what I say here for my Servian brothers means also for all my Slavonian brothers, who, despite all their efforts, and struggles, and their virtues and sacrifices are still living under the tyranny of powerful inimical governments. This occasion makes it clear to me that the teaching of the Holy Bible is the main foundation of the life of Americans. I realize that the Americans follow the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ who says, “You must love your neighbour.” There is no greater happiness than to do kind deeds to others. I deem it as my holiest duty to kiss this consecrated ground upon which your heroic ancestors have shed their blood and in which their bones have been laid to rest. I deem it also my Christian duty to offer God a prayer for the repose of their souls, just as if they were of my own blood.’

“At that I kneeled, kissed the ground and offered a prayer for the repose of those who have died for their fatherland. Even if my speech was not understood the prayer undoubtedly was, for as soon as I kneeled, they all raised their hats, and the gentleman in

the officer's uniform kneeled, too, during the entire prayer. When I arose I said, 'Glory to the dead soldiers and prosperity to the American people.'

"Almost all the speakers came to congratulate and shake hands with me. The young American introduced them all to me. The honourable burgomaster shook my hand and thanked me.

"And thus ended this impressive celebration, in which I took such a prominent part, as though I was in our own Cegra or Nisar, or any other historical place. I was not among strangers, but among my own people by heart and soul. After the last song was sung, the gentleman who had made the first speech called all present to offer a prayer, and holding his right hand high, he recited aloud a prayer most solemnly.

"After that one of my companions accompanied me to the automobile. The others took the cars and we all together went back to W——.

"I almost forgot to tell you that, after all was over, two musicians went to different parts of the cemetery and began to play on the bugle horn as though on a battle-field. That, believe me, was not only interesting, but impressive, and I like it very much.

"I enclose two little flags such as the children here wore in their dresses. I have kissed both of them. Wear them on St. John's day, for they are the symbols of a great and free and truly Christian country. The

flowers I picked from the graves of the soldiers.

"May God protect you till I come home. Greetings to old faithful Miluska. I have written about my coming home to the curate."

The children watched me as I read, and when I finished, I too kissed the flag, and Velislav said: "When I am big I shall go to America."

"Yes, when you are big," his sister said teasingly. "You will be afraid; but, brother-kin, on St. John's day when the Sun stands still three times you might just jump off the Bresina. Perhaps you will land in father's lap, over in Pennsylvania."

XI

The Dark People

IT was the day after the funeral. A heart-broken, Swedish grandmother, a silent German husband, too phlegmatic to show his grief, and a little baby, crying feebly, were "*die trauernden Hinterbliebenen*," as the German local paper expressed it.

The death of "*Hans Schurmeier's Ehefrau*," briefly chronicled, was only one scene in a long tragedy, begun the day she was born. Her death did not end it ; for her baby bore marks of the taint which had clouded its mother's whole life, and made her glad to die, although she had just seen the face of her first-born. So terrible was the taint, that both the Swedish grandmother and the German father wished that the baby were dead also.

Hans Schurmeier said it with a muttered curse as he bent over the baby's cradle, and fearing that his uplifted hand would strike

the helpless thing, I sprang between, while the Swedish grandmother came to my aid. As she looked at the wee bit of humanity, she too, although a woman, and its grandmother, had to restrain herself, not to do it violence.

The father had gone to the corner saloon to find solace, and while the grandmother sat as if paralyzed by grief, I pondered, as I often had, over this tragedy, which I had long, but vaguely, guessed at.

The baby's mother whom we had just buried was young, yet seemed old and worn; gentle and refined in manner; but always sad. Sitting in the little parlour now, the evidences of her housewifely arts were on everything; the poor little baby crying so piteously in its cradle wore dainty clothing, which I knew its mother had made; Hans, although dull and undemonstrative, had been a kind husband, so far as I knew, yet poor Inga seemed to live under a cloud and her eyes had a hunted look in their dusky depths, pathetic to see.

I almost started, when the quiet of the room was suddenly broken by a cry of

anguish from the grandmother as she took the baby into her arms. With a sob she began rocking it on her bosom and while her tears flowed, she told me the story of Inga's sad life.

“*Ya, ya!* I am to blame,” she moaned. “I am to blame, although I did not know. It was not altogether my fault. I come yoost from the old country and I worked in a hotel. I was a chambermaid, and he was the head waiter. He was a dark man, and so handsome, with curly black hair. I was lonesome and he made love to me like a man, like men in the old country. *Ya*, they laughed, at the hotel, and the lady who kept it told me not to go with him; but I said: ‘I love him. I like the dark man; he is kind, he will make a good home for me.’

“In the old country, *ya*, in the old country, men love the girls a long time and then they get married; they always get married. The dark man promised to marry me, but he didn't.

“When the hotel lady found out about me, she told the boss, and they sent the dark man

away. He never come to see me no more. After Inga was born I married Larsen. He worked in the hotel too. He said : 'I don't care. I love you,' and he took me and Inga away from there.

"He was a good man, Larsen was. Sometimes he got drunk ; but he never talked to me about the dark man, and he never abused me, and he was always good to Inga. We had three children. You know Lars, and John and Mary. We talked nothing but Swedish at home, and when we lived over the river Inga went to Swedish Sunday-school and church, and none of our Swedish neighbours knew about the dark man.

"One day Inga come from school crying, and she said : 'Mamma, the children call me a nigger.' She was seven years old. Her hair was almost white, and her skin was white too, and her eyes was dark blue. My heart yumped with pain when she said that and I said : 'You are a little Swede, a tow-head,' and I pulled her white hair and my heart give another yump ; for I saw that her hair was getting curly, small little curls like

the dark man had, and when I looked into her blue eyes I saw they was getting darker. She went back to school and I cried and then I forgot.

“Larsen was killed by a train a few years after that. He was working on a bridge by the Big Four. Not long after that Inga come home from church one Sunday. She come running in from the yard and she said: ‘Mother, the children call me a nigger. Am I a nigger?’

“I said again, ‘Of course not. You are a little Swede, a towhead.’ I looked at her hair and I saw that it was much darker, and I could not pull my fingers through it, so curly it was, and on her face was little speckles like from the sun.

“*Ya!* when I saw all that I cried and she said: ‘Why do you cry, mother?’ and I said, ‘For your father.’ Then my heart give another yump, and I said: ‘For Larsen.’ . . . *Ya*, I can’t tell you no more,” she said between sobs, and I let her have her cry out while she went to the cradle and laid the little baby gently down. It had fallen asleep.

"I better tell you all," she said after a while. "Maybe my heart gets softer for the baby.

"One other day Inga come home and said: 'Mother, am I a nigger?' and her eyes looked up to me and I saw that the white was all yellow, and the beautiful blue all black—and the speckles on the face was many—but I said: 'No, you are a Swede.'

"Then she said: 'Mother, why is my hair kinky like a nigger? The children all call me nigger.'

"I didn't say nothing but my heart yumped and yumped, and I did not know what to do or what to say. One day when she was fifteen she come home after school and she threw herself on the floor, and she cried like a wild thing: 'Mother, I *am* a nigger. I *am* a nigger, and you know it—you know you do!'

"I said: 'No, no, you are a Swede. I am a Swede and so are you.'

"She said: 'Mother, you lie! you lie! For teacher said I must go to school with the nigger children.'

"I went to see the superintendent and he said: 'I am very sorry, Mrs. Larsen, but unless you can prove that Inga has no coloured blood in her veins, you will have to take her to the coloured school. The children refuse to come to school so long as she comes. I wish I could keep her here. She is a lovely child and always at the head of her class.'

"I remember every word he said, yoost like it was burnt into my brain. What could I do? I never told anything to Inga; but she never went to school no more. She went to work in houses. She always had fine places because she was like a lady in her ways. She spent all her money for medicine to take the speckles off her skin, and for things to straighten out her hair and when they didn't help, she saved all her wages for two months and bought a wig, a 'transformation,' the advertisement called it. It cost forty dollars.

"It covered her whole head. It was a beautiful light brown colour and the hair was very straight. It was braided and wound around and around her head. For a while

she was very happy, but there was something wrong with it, and it poisoned her and she got awful sick. I thought she would die. It seemed as if her heart would break when she had to stop wearing that 'transformation.'

"For a long time she didn't go nowhere. She yoost kept on spending more money for things to make her hair straight. She never had went back to the Swedish church.

"You know how she went to your church and how she met Hans at the Sunday-school picnic. One day she come home smiling. I never saw her so happy for many years, and she said: 'I am engaged to Hans Schurmeier.' Then my heart yumped again and I cried but I did not say anything, and she said: 'Why are you not happy?' I couldn't say a word.

"*Ya*, she married Hans. He wasn't long from the Old Country and he didn't know about the dark people. I never *can* call them niggers. I am to blame for letting her marry; but what should I have said? She loved Hans and she was so happy.

“Oh ! I wish now that I had told her everything. They was married two weeks when she come home crying. ‘Mother, I can’t find a place to live except among the niggers and it makes Hans angry.’ I said : ‘Come here to live.’ It was my house ; Larsen bought it for me. They come ; but then Lars, who is the oldest, said *no*, he wouldn’t live with no nigger, it would spoil his job ; the men was already making fun of him.

“Mary, she come home crying because the girls in the office said ‘nigger’ whenever she come in, and she wouldn’t stand it. I had to tell Hans and Inga to move out. *Ya ! Ya !* I cried and carried on so I thought my heart would break.

“Inga never come to see me again—but one day about a year after they was married Hans come and asked me to go to his house. Inga was sick. I found her crying like mad, that she didn’t want her baby to be a nigger. She was sick a long time, and I was with her day and night. All the time she cried like mad, that she didn’t want her baby to be a nigger.

“I tried to comfort her. I told her about her father, that he wasn't very black, and that the baby would surely be white. Then she was quiet; but her eyes looked like she was dying of hunger, so pitiful, my heart yumped all the time and I could not sleep or eat.

“*Ya, ya.* We had an awful time when the baby come. Hans run out of the house; he was afraid to come in to see the baby for he knew now about the dark people. I wanted to die when I saw it. Inga was out of her head and she was saying all the time, ‘Not a nigger, not a nigger.’ She was calling all the time for the stuff for her kinky hair, and the medicine to take the speckles off her face. When she come to herself and her eyes opened, she called for her baby. I said: ‘There ain't no baby.’ She looked at me and her eyes almost cut right through me, and she said yoost like she said years before: ‘You lie, mother, you lie!’ Then the baby cried, and she begun to scream: ‘I want my baby! Give me my baby!’

“I was like paralyzed. I couldn't move,

and she got up and looked into the cradle. When she saw the baby she give one cry. I'll hear it to my dying day, and I hope that will be soon. It went through my bones and my marrow. It was like as if I had put a hot iron in her heart. Then she fell back and never opened her eyes again. *Ya, ya*, poor baby! I wish you was dead too! I wish I was dead too! *Ya, ya*. The dark people! The dark people!"

XII

“ *Will He Let Me In ?* ”

“ *G*UTER *Herrleben*, will *he* let me in ? ”

That is the question one can hear from a thousand lips, all the way from the Russian border to Ellis Island. The emphasis is always on the third personal pronoun ; for to the steerage, *he* is the government, the Czar or one of the Czar's minions. *He* is arbitrary, autocratic, and immovable, except when palm meets palm with the softening touch of gold between. That alone buys leniency and buys it by the shutting of the eye, not by the opening of the heart.

He, the Czar, his governors, *pristavy*, *natchalniky*, Cossacks and gendarmes have made that *he* look to the emigrant like the great terror of the judgment day. *He* has a small forehead, shaggy hair, a brutal face and small, blinking eyes, always hungry for



"UNDERNEATH THE PRUSSIAN HELMET THEY SAW OTHER SMALL, FIERCE, BLINKING EYES"

rubles ; never satisfied, always wanting more. Those small, blinking, hungry eyes have followed the emigrant from the crowded Ghetto, reeking in filth, to the railroad station—there to be appeased by rubles, and more rubles, as the journey proceeded.

At the border station at Alexandrova they looked fiercer and hungrier than ever, again demanding rubles, and more rubles ere the barriers fell.

When Russia was left behind, the wanderers still feared the *he*—for underneath the Prussian helmet they saw other small, fierce, blinking eyes ; but they could not be shut by rubles. They learned long ago that this is a different *he* from the one across the River Pruth. Here they lie, for what they cannot buy.

This *he* does not look into the pockets of those who crowd across the border—although he likes to be sure that they have money to go safely through his domain.

This *he* looks into eyes and lungs as if he were drafting men into his army.

“ The cough of our little boy, *guter Herr-*

leben? It is only of yesterday. No, we are not going to America. We are going to Amsterdam ; we have a son in business who will take care of us."

Hundreds have preceded this man, thousands are crowding after, and the *he* is very busy ; so Prussian eyes are shut for a moment and the little coughing boy is safely crowded into a fourth-class railway carriage.

But the Prussian *he* looks in upon the boy a dozen times as they travel across his country, and each time he gets the same answer. The cough is only of yesterday, and they are going to Amsterdam.

"Why should we want to go to America ? *Gott behüt !* Oh, no, a thousand times no !"

The cough is not of yesterday, nor are they going to Amsterdam, but to the great waiting ship at Rotterdam, and as they near it, they ask again the same question, "Will *he* let him in ?"

The Dutch *he* is not so terrible. He has no helmet or sword or gun ; his eyes do not flash as if they were a search-light, and he only asks questions.

“ Are you an Anarchist ? ”

“ *Oy*, an Anarchist ! ” And the father trembles when he repeats the word. “ Anarchist ? Of course not. Government is of God, holy. Something before which one must stand in awe, as if it were the great judgment.”

“ Are you a Polygamist ? ”

What does that mean ? Shall he say yes or no ? Which will please the *he* most ?

The Dutch *he* does not wait for an answer to this and other questions in the long catechism. He mumbles them as a priest might, whose lips have grown dull to the words repeated countless times during the day.

One after the other the crowds pass, laying bare their bodies where they must and concealing of mind and heart and pocketbook all they can.

The Dutch *he* has let the boy with the “ cough of yesterday ” into the crowded steerage with hundreds and hundreds of others. The pungent, all-pervading odour of carbolic acid mingles with the foul fumes of the

Ghettos ; of peasant huts and stables, of garlic and *vodka* ; of leather boots and sheepskin coats.

Above the babel of tongues and above the rattle of anchor chains rises the "cough of yesterday" ; just the little cough. The steerage doesn't mind ; it's just a little cough, the kind they have heard always and nobody cares. Ah, yes, but the cough persists, and they begin to say to the anxious father, "*He* won't let him in."

He—this other *he*—the last one, who guards the gate which separates fathers and mothers, which stands between hope and despair, between oppression and opportunity—this *he* is the most terrible of all.

He cannot be bought and *he* knows all the lies which brood in anxious hearts. Be careful now—you unhappy ones ! *He* will look at you most searchingly, this *he*, and if your eyelids droop or your breast labours or your limbs lag, *he* will mark you, and you will have to face him again and again. *He* will prove every word of yours as if *he* were Jehovah before whom no iniquity is hidden.

Yes, poor things ! they will invent new lies. From the time the boat leaves its dock until the new land appears, the steerage passengers are busy inventing them. There is no one on the great ship to give advice or calm their fears except those who have been there before. They know *his* nature and their advice, which is at a premium, is to lie.

“ Will *he* let me in ? ” asks a sloven, upon whom vice has written its story.

“ Not if you wear that gown, bought with the wages of sin. *He* has a sharp eye—*he* is an expert at discovering your kind. *He* will know you by your clothing, and read your wretched soul in your shifting eyes.”

“ Rachael, daughter of a virtuous race, now one of her numerous harlots, put on sackcloth and ashes. Do not look into the eyes of the men who ask questions ; look as innocent as once you were, before every dirty *mujik* could buy your body for the price of a drink.”

“ Will *he* let me in ? ” asks an undersized youth with limbs scarcely strong enough to hold him. “ I am a baker by trade.”

“ Lie, my boy,” advises his companion.

"Tell him you have a rich brother in New York who earns fifty dollars a week instead of the ten he does earn." This man will lie too, and others will swear his lie is truth.

"What about me?" asks an old man whose face is furrowed and care-worn. "Will *he* let me in?"

"Old men are his pet aversion. You have a daughter married in New York. If you want to get into the shelter of the wretched tenement in which she lives, tell him you are fifty years of age instead of sixty, that your son-in-law will give you a job at fifteen dollars a week, though he works for twelve; tell him you are a skilled tailor, though you would not know how to pull bastings out of a pair of trousers."

"And you? You have a job waiting for you? Tell them you have no job, because there is a law which prohibits your getting a job before you land."

"How about me?" anxiously inquires a young widow whom sorrow has not robbed of her beauty.

"You are all alone? Don't know any one?"

Tell them you have a cousin in Chicago. You haven't any? Oh, well! I've got a cousin who will be your cousin too."

"Your eyes hurt, my lad? Lie about it. Say they never hurt before. Go to the doctor right away. Do anything. Only don't let *him* see that they are sore."

"Your little boy looks bad. How pale he is and how he coughs! No, *he* won't let him in."

"You have two sons in New York? Honest?"

"By Jehovah! By the memory of my sainted parents! They are well to do."

"No, *he* won't let him in, not with that cough. No. You haven't money enough to make *him* shut *his* eyes. You can cry till doomsday. You won't soften *his* heart. *He* will not let your boy in."

The sun is shining on the deck, the storm has ceased. The steerage is alive once more with shouting peasant lads drinking beer, while their lassies, sitting snugly beside them, eat salt pickles and cast sweet glances at their partners.

Dirty children of all ages run about while their mothers squat in squalid groups on the deck.

The Russian Jews are in evidence as usual with their prayer-books and teakettles. Everybody is out—even the boy with the cough, although they had to carry him from his bunk. His face is paler than ever and his eyes—big, black, dreamy eyes—look sadly out upon the sea and sky, as they let him down among the revellers.

For a moment there is silence. Then the peasant lads begin to sing of poppy fields and maidens' hearts ; of red cheeks and white wine. Some one plays a harmonicon and the jerky, pathetic notes cause the blood of the peasant lads to run faster. The maidens respond, and around the pallid child they dance, wildly and clumsily, forgetting the great terror, *he*, waiting with his searching gaze and nimble wits.

Approaching the boy with the cough as he lies on the deck, I ask : "What can I do for you, my lad? I'll get you oranges, candy, anything you want."

“Give me some chalk,” he says between laboured breaths.

A sailor brings a bit of chalk from the upper deck, where it was used to mark the scores at a game of ring toss or shuffle-board. The boy's thin, pallid fingers grasp the chalk eagerly as children reach for sweets, and upon the deck where he lies he draws houses and trees and clouds. He does it as quickly as if he were a conjurer. This is a new sensation on board, more wonderful than jumping fish or passing sails.

Music and dancing are forgotten and the mob crowds around the boy, too close to give him space for his work. While every one oh's! and ah's! the father tells me the story of the boy with the “cough of yesterday.”

He was born in a tavern in Russia, into an atmosphere of smoke and *vodka* fumes and in a room so damp that, when the frost came, the walls were like crystal, fading into murky rivulets where warm breath touched it. When the boy was old enough, he went to the *Chedar* and learned reading and writing, but not much else. The teacher told the

father that his boy showed no signs of becoming a scholar and that his slate was more often covered by pictures than by the queer cubical Hebrew letters.

One morning when the father woke, he found the boy standing on his bed moving his index finger over the wall. He thought the child ill, or in some mischief; but when he left his bed and looked at the wall he found it covered by pictures of various kinds.

His astonishment was no greater than that of his early customers who came before the pictures faded. Among them was the veterinary surgeon who was employed on the Baron's estate, celebrated for its stud horses. Through him and through others, news of this prodigy reached the Baron, and one morning he came himself into the ill-smelling hut to see the pictures on the crystal wall.

The boy had genius. Where it came from would be an idle question. His forefathers, from the time when Moses brought the Ten Commandments from Sinai, abhorred graven images, and the skill to shape them is almost dead or dormant in the race.

The Baron hated the Jews except when he needed money ; but his heart was softened to the boy by the universal appeal of art, and he told the father that he must take him to the city. Parental pride is much the same in all races but is especially strong in the Jew, and no sacrifice is too great to bring to it. The tavern was sold and the march to Moscow begun.

The interior of Russia is closed to the Jew except to a privileged class ; to this the father did not belong, and he was ordered to leave the city which it had cost so much to reach. In vain did he plead the boy's talent. They gave him thirty days of grace before going and gave that reprieve only, because of the rubles which he pressed into the *pristav's* hand.

The boy spent most of his time in the picture-gallery, and it was from there he was taken by the police, and put outside the walls of the Holy City of Moscow. From there the family went to St. Petersburg, and through the intervention of rich co-religionists was permitted to remain six months. The father se-

cured an art teacher who led the boy out of the mysticism of his art into its technic. He could not be moved from his drawing-board and stooped over it day and night, as his forefathers stooped over the Talmud. At sunrise when his father was laying the phylacteries over his hairy body, the boy was working with charcoal and with the brush; but before the six months were over the small-eyed, gold-hungry *he* asked for more rubles, and when they were not forthcoming, the family was put outside the city of St. Petersburg as it had been banished from Moscow. What finally decided the father to emigrate he did not say; but he looked to America as the haven where his boy could study art unmolested, and ultimately satisfy the parental pride.

And now came the question so often asked, "Will *he* let him in? The cough, *guter Herrleben*? Why shouldn't he cough? The damp of the hut in which we lived—the chilly rooms in Moscow and St. Petersburg did it. It is only a cold; it will pass. Why shouldn't *he* let him in? Doesn't *he* like the *Jüden*?"

“ No, that isn't it.”

“ Then why won't *he* let him in ? ”

He was not the only one in that steerage who asked the question. It ran from stem to stern ; it rose above the joy of meeting, above the chance for a new beginning, even above the thrill over the escape from gaol.

The cabin can hide its trinkets bought in Paris, it may be anxious regarding the examination of baggage and fear that precious gowns will be crushed in the process ; but the steerage cannot hide its sores, its weak limbs, and its empty pockets.

When the ship reaches the harbour, the cabin looks with joy to the broken sky-line, with its towering palaces of trade ; but the steerage is deaf and dumb except to the one agonizing question : “ *Will he let me in ?* ”

Down on the lower deck the emigrants are crowded together as at the beginning of the voyage, and with the great fear still tugging at their hearts. One can almost hear them beating out that one question as the throb of the ship ceases.

And now a new *he* has taken command.

He has no helmet, it is true. A golden symbol on his cap and a suit of blue mark him from the rest ; but he has a keen, cold, unsympathetic look. He holds a watch, by which he counts the strangers, his mind and heart seeming like the watch,—made of metal and not of flesh.

One by one they come from below ; one, ten, a hundred, a thousand. They do not go fast enough. Drive them up.

“Hoy ! Hoy !” Evidently the man has driven cattle on the prairies ; thus he drives these humans from below. He seems to be all eyes—he says nothing—for there is another *he* and yet another, and the last *he* holds the keys to the kingdom.

The ship is fast on her dock, safe from wave and wind, a dead, lifeless thing ; but below wait the thousands, dead to the stifling heat and the gnawing hunger, alive only to the one question : “Will *he* let me in ?”

The boy with the “cough of yesterday” lies upon his bunk and beside him are his parents, anxious as only parents can be ; as

only the Jewish parent can be ; for he is “ a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.”

“ Will he let him in, *guter Herrleben* ? ” they ask for the thousandth time.

It is nine o'clock at night and there are twelve hours left. “ We must pray ; perhaps *he* will let him in.”

They are praying as only the Jew can pray, in inarticulate groaning. The little boy's great, black eyes are growing dim. Midnight strikes and there is such silence as is possible where over a thousand people try to sleep just before the judgment day. The air is heavy and hot and tense, as if fate lurked therein.

The boy with the cough is sleeping ; his old father, with drooping head, sleeps too, his beard touching the face of the child. There is a noise, a rattle as if something had broken—the thin body moves, then is quiet again. The old man, half awake, strokes his beard and as he lifts his hand towards the light, I see that it is red, blood red.

It is morning. One by one the emigrants are let down from the great ship and counted

again, that none is missing. Will *he* let them in? The harlot, the old man, the baker boy, the young widow, the children without parents, the man who has a job and the man who has none? They do not know.

But the boy with the "cough of yesterday," the little boy who drew pictures on the frozen wall of the tavern, to him HE came. Yes, HE came, the great terror. HE could not be bought, or plead with, or lied to. HE came early in the morning. HE asked no questions. HE did not ask: "Are you an Anarchist, a Jew, or a Gentile? Are you white or yellow, rich or poor?"

HE just opened the gate, and let the wanderer in.

XIII

Americanus Sum

“**I** WONDER why Mrs. Salciccioli is so nervous this morning,” I said to my wife. “She acts like a hen on a hot griddle.”

Now I have never seen a hen on a hot griddle except when properly prepared for the ordeal, and then the hen did not behave at all as our landlady was behaving. She wiped the dust from my desk six times in succession, from the topmost pigeonholes down to the claws of its ill-shaped legs. I endured this, until she began the seventh attack, and then, with an oft repeated “*bene, bene,*” I gently pushed her out of the room.

I had just succeeded in putting Mrs. Salciccioli out of my mind and was trying hard to make up my lost twenty minutes when, after a nervous knock on the door, the cause of my trouble again entered the room. This time

she was accompanied by Mr. Saliccioli, who never by any chance permitted me to forget that he was a Roman with an ancient lineage, while I was only a barbarian from beyond the seas. How contemptuously he shrugged his shoulders when he deigned to talk to me about "the dollar country," as he called it.

"No sculpture, no music, no painting, except that which you bring from Italy.

"Look at the poor Italian! no coal, no water-power, no silver, no gold; but he takes a block of marble from Carrara and carves a god out of it."

There was no use arguing with a man who believed that our flowers have no fragrance, our birds no song, and our children no talent except for making money.

However, he was never too proud to accept the handsome sum of American money we paid for our lodgings, or the tips frequently bestowed. Never did I hear him say more than the courtly *grazia*; while to my cordial greetings, he replied with an abbreviated "*giorno*," minus the flourishes to which one becomes accustomed in Italy.

On this particular morning Mr. Saliccioli carried a newspaper, which by its bulk betrayed its over seas origin. His wife held a letter which she pressed into my reluctant hand.

"Pardon, Signor, it is a letter from our son, our Rocco, our eldest who has been in America seven years. It is the biggest letter he has ever sent."

"Will you not look at the newspaper?" asked the husband. "A grand American newspaper! It is wonderful! Glorious!"

To hear Mr. Saliccioli speak in such appreciative and enthusiastic terms of anything American, was so unheard of an occurrence that I hastily told him to show me the paper. Eagerly, while Mrs. Saliccioli hovered around, he spread out before us twenty odd sheets of newspaper. Page after page of wasted forest and whatever stuff printer's ink is made from; then his thin, long finger pointed to a picture.

"This is our dear Rocco," he said proudly, "our eldest, and his picture is in the American paper."

"I wonder what he has been cured of," murmured my wife, and I did not tell the proud Roman that in America one might have his picture in the paper for various reasons.

It was well that I did not so humiliate my haughty landlord, for I saw in large headlines, over columns of closely printed matter, the reason that Rocco's picture was there, and it fully justified the father's pride.

"New citizens banqueted." Thus the head-lines ran. "Brilliant speeches made. Cordial welcome to the naturalized," and so down the column, as follows :

"The Leading Men of the City were Hosts at a Banquet and Newly Made Americans Listened to Kindly, Cordial Speeches."

"One hundred and sixty men who once were subjects of kings and queens and czars and emperors sat down to a great dinner table in R—— the evening of July 4th, subjects no longer, but citizens of the United States. With them sat down judges and clergymen and educators—the most widely known and influential men of the city. These

men were the hosts ; and the ex-subjects of a half dozen potentates, many of whom could speak English only brokenly, diggers of ditches whose hands were hard from outdoor toil, were the guests. The city was bidding its new citizens welcome.

“It was an effort to make this assemblage of new-made Americans feel that they really were Americans, that the old residents of R—— were glad that the new ones had come, and that they were eager to help them in every way. The guests, Germans, Italians, Greeks, men of Holland, Englishmen, Irishmen, Russians and Poles, went away feeling that they were no longer “strangers in a strange land” but fellow citizens of their hosts and that those hosts had a real interest in their welfare.

“Dr. R——, president of the university, told the new citizens that the stability of the American government depended upon a reverence for law and a recognition of the fact that liberty under the law is the only true liberty.

“‘The signers of the Declaration of In-

dependence,' he said, 'were all immigrants or the sons of immigrants, but they were all united in the purpose of seeking liberty in this new land. The America of to-morrow will not be the land of the free and the home of the brave unless it is growing and triumphant by liberty under the law.'

"The most brilliant addresses were made by the immigrants themselves, who with deep emotion told what America meant to them."

Then came that part of the story told in Rocco's letter to his parents, which his mother had brought for me to see. I gladly read it.

"MY ADORABLE AND MUCH-LOVED PARENTS:

"I am sending you by this post fifty lire which is a little more than I sent last month. The ten extra lire are 'my treat.' That is what the Americans say, when they are very happy and want to give somebody something, because they are happy. Often they do it by drinking much beer in a saloon. I think it would be wrong for me to spend money that way, for my happiness is a high

and lofty one ; too high for drink. I am too happy even for writing. My pen jumps all over the paper.

“I am still working in the big shop as I wrote you. The shop is big and nice and clean, and I have a good foreman. The only thing I do not like is that he never calls me by my right name. He says it would break his jaw to pronounce it. Americans want everything quick and easy ; so they call me Rock. The name of our honourable family they do not even attempt to write or pronounce. They say that it would twist their tongues out of joint.

“In the night school where I have been going, they were teaching about how to be a good citizen, so I asked my foreman how to become a citizen of the United States.

“He went with me to the court where I was asked if I had my first papers, which I was glad to say I could answer by saying *yes*. Then the judge asked me many questions and when I answered he said : ‘Very good,’ which means *Molto Bene*.

“He asked me to swear allegiance to my

new country and I did it; but it made no great impression upon me, as it was done so simply. The Americans do not believe in ceremonials as we do. I went away with my papers in my pocket, and then I forgot all about it.

“Last month one day, I received a beautiful invitation to a banquet at the finest hotel in the city. It was printed in the colours of this free country: red, white and blue. I showed it to the foreman and he said I ought to go.

“It was on the 4th of July. That is the day the Americans celebrate as the great national holy day. Always before, the shop closed on that day and we had nothing to do except drink and shoot firecrackers, of which the Americans are very fond. Many of them get hurt on that day, and kill themselves in memory of the time when they killed the Englishmen.

“This time I did not buy drink or firecrackers; but a new suit of clothes, and a white shirt and a collar and a beautiful cravat. I went to the hotel, the same one

where I used to scrub the floors and wash the windows when I first came here.

“The man who used to call me *Dago*, an ugly name they give the Italians here, took my hat and gave me a piece of pasteboard and I was taken in the elevator that the guests ride in, to a beautiful room, all decorated with flags. I had a seat at the chief table by the side of the consul of our country.

“The dinner was the finest I have ever eaten. I think not even the highest nobles in Rome eat finer than we did ; but better than the eating was the music, and then, best of all, the speeches.

“The Judge of the Supreme Court of the state was the master of ceremonies. The president of the university made a speech, and so did the padre, who they say is a good man, although you know I have not much love for the padres of our church.

“Then the master of ceremonies asked me to make a speech !

“Beloved and much honoured parents, I felt as if that whole room was going around and around. There I stood, your son, before

those noble men and women, and did speak. I would have given anything in the world if you, my beloved parents, had been there to have seen my triumph. They clapped their hands and shouted bravo! at everything I said.

“I told them that I am a Roman, that my father’s ancestors were once citizens of old Rome; I told them how through ignorance and heavy taxation my forefathers lost everything, even their citizenship, and how thankful I am that now in America, though I am working at a menial job, citizenship has been restored to me in a more powerful, richer and better country.

“I told them how I wished my beloved and revered parents were here to see the triumph of their son. I also said that as my ancestors fought for Rome and then for Italy, so I want to fight, like our great Garibaldi.

“I told them that my honoured father belonged to the Young Italy, that he knew the great Mazzini, our statesman, scholar and philosopher.

“I told them that he fought against the

Austrians and later against the Papal army, at Castelfidardo ; how he was wounded on the 17th of September (I am not sure about that date, much honoured and respected father, but the Americans are ignorant of our history and it does not matter).

“ At last I could not hear myself talk, for the Americans clapped their hands all the time.

“ Then, my beloved and much honoured parents, came the great event of the evening. All rose to their feet and together we vowed for the good of the city in which we live.

“ This is what we all vowed :

“ ‘ We will never bring disgrace to this our city by any act of dishonesty or cowardice, nor ever desert our comrades ; we will fight for the ideals and sacred things of the city, both alone and with many ; we will revere and obey the city’s laws, and do our best to incite a like respect and reverence for those above us who are prone to annul them and set them at naught ; we will strive unceasingly to quicken the public’s sense of civic

duty ; that thus, in all these ways, we may transmit this city not only not less but greater, better and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.'

"When it was all done we sang together the American national hymn.

"After I got home to my lodgings I could not sleep, but I went to my trunk and took out my citizenship papers. I spread them out upon my bed, and I knelt down before them and I kissed them a hundred times, and I said, over and over again : 'Americanus Sum—Americanus Sum.'

"Now, my beloved and adored parents, I send you the paper which tells about it and has my picture, that you only see that I report correctly to you.

"My picture is not very well done. I think I look much better in life. In the big picture which is also in the paper, where all are taken together, I look like a ghost ; for it was taken with a big flash of light, and I was frightened very much.

"Now, my beloved and much esteemed parents——" Here the father asked me to

read no farther—but his wife urged me to go on.

“I hope you are not worrying any more over your son, and that you feel you have cause to be proud of him.

“I like the work and am honoured by the foreman. I do not gamble any more, and some of these days when everything is forgotten in Rome I shall come home to see you ——”

I returned the letter unfinished to Mrs. Saliccioli, for her husband was growing more and more uneasy.

Taking the newspaper and the letter, he disappeared with scant courtesy, leaving his excited wife to follow at her leisure. She was eager to tell us about her Rocco, and we were not unwilling to hear.

Rocco was born into genteel poverty, the oldest of many. The father was proud and harsh, and the boy was on the streets more than in school or at home. He fell in with evil minded people and before his twelfth year was arrested for picking pockets.

He went from bad to worse, until he was

drafted into the army ; there, chafing under the restraint, he deserted and went to America.

The father became morose and silent, and forbade the boy's name to be mentioned in the family.

When letters finally came from Rocco he never read them. Even when the letters brought enclosures of ten lire, twenty, thirty and as much as fifty lire a month the father refused to believe in the boy.

"Not until last night, Signor, when the newspaper came would he speak our boy's name. Now he is happy and proud. And I, Signorina," turning to my wife. "You will know how I feel when your boys grow up. Ah ! the blessed Virgin only knows how I have prayed.

"Honoured Signor, will you do me one great favour? When you return to that wonderful America of yours will you go to its ruler and carry to his honourable highness the gratitude of an Italian mother for what that noble country has done for her son ? "

It had taken Mrs. Salciccioli a long time

to tell her story ; so the morning was over and the luncheon hour near, when at last, with many apologies, she bowed herself out.

I felt repaid for my lost morning, however, when, a few moments later as we were going out into the glory of an Italian noon, Mr. Saliccioli stopped me at the foot of the long, cold staircase.

“Signor,—I beg your pardon. I have said to you often that your country has no pictures, no music,—that it cannot make gods out of Carrara marble. That is all true I still believe—but”—and he said it with evident reluctance—“it has made a man out of my son Rocco, and that is true Art—the grandest, the noblest art.”

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